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**ANECDOTES AND ARGUMENTS:
THE CHREIA IN ANTIQUITY AND EARLY CHRISTIANITY**

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INTRODUCTION

The Chreia in Greco-Roman Literature and Education Project at Claremont was conceived during the 1978-79 academic year in the course of the Hellenistic Texts Seminar.¹ The seminar regularly included graduate students and faculty at Claremont with scholars from other schools in Southern California who met fortnightly to read Greek texts and to explore the interesting worlds of the Greco-Roman age. Cynic texts had been suggested for that year's seminar by two seminar members on the faculty at the University of Southern California. Edward O'Neil had recently published his translation of the texts of Teles. The Cynic Teacher, and Ron Hock had worked on Cynicism and early Christianity since his years at Yale. Epictetus' well-known essay "On the Cynic Life" was chosen as a primer; a collection of anecdotes by Antisthenes would be the major challenge.²

One of the anecdotes in the collection was introduced by the curious remark that it was "unlikely," i.e., wrongly attributed to Antisthenes. The remark caught the attention of the seminar, since it revealed a certain sophistication by the ancients in their judging the appropriateness of a saying for a famous sage. Tracking the source of the anecdote to the Progymnasmata of Theon, it was discovered that the saying in question occurred as an example in a list of nine categories for "refuting" chreiai. Apparently, this anecdote was called a chreia ($\chiρεία$), which means "need, use or useful," though it was unclear whether the original referent was to the practice ("use") of coining and collecting anecdotes, or to the instructive usefulness of their maxims. Chreiai could be "refuted," said Theon, for being obscure, excessive, incomplete, impossible, useless, implausible, false, disadvantageous or shameful.³ Theon, a first century C.E. teacher of rhetoric, had used the anec-

dote attributed to Antisthenes in illustration of the category "implausible":

Because it is unlikely that Antisthenes, who was of course an Athenian, said on coming from Athens to Lacedaemon that he was coming from the women's quarters to the men's.⁴

The explanation for implausibility is that Antisthenes "was of course an Athenian," and therefore would not have associated Athens with "the women's quarters" in belittling contrast to Sparta.

Intrigued by this evidence of ancient critical theory, the seminar shifted its focus to a translation of Theon's entire discussion. The chapter was called "On the Chreia," and it offered a thorough explication of types of chreia and their uses for the first lessons in rhetorical training (*progymnasmata* [$\pi\tau\sigma\gamma\mu\nu\alpha\sigma\mu\tau\alpha$] or "first exercises"). From this fascinating discussion and the desire to compare Theon's lessons with those of other authors in the large corpus of rhetorical handbooks, the Chreia Project was born. All "On the Chreia" chapters and other discussions of the use of the chreia in rhetorical education would be collected.⁵ Translations would be prepared with critical notes, and the whole arranged for publication. Edward O'Neil was asked to serve as Director of the project and, with Ron Hock, to edit the anticipated volumes. The first volume now has appeared, The Chreia in Ancient Rhetoric, and others are promised.

The initial phase of the project was carried by the Hellenistic Texts Seminar during the period from 1979-81. First-draft translations were rendered and given critique, while forays were taken into the larger fields of classical rhetoric, Hellenistic education and the literature of the Greco-Roman period. It was necessary to enlarge the arena of inquiry in order to answer critical questions arising from the work of translation. Nevertheless, these forays proved interesting in their own right, for they opened new perspectives on a literary culture which was in the process of learning to read critically and to write persuasively with rhetorical theory firmly in hand. A number of discoveries were made, and projects were devised to carry the investigation into other textual traditions.⁶

One of the early ancillary investigations is the subject of this article. Two discoveries were made that linked the work of the Hellenistic Texts Seminar at Claremont to the studies of the pronouncement stories in the Synoptic Gospels by a working group of the Society of Biblical Literature organized by Robert Tannehill in 1975. The first insight was that the pronouncement stories attributed to Jesus bore striking resemblance to the common chreia and that the discussions of the rhetors on the chreia might help explain features and functions of the pronouncement stories that were otherwise inexplicable. A first exchange

between the two groups occurred at the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in 1981. The importance of the chreia for study of the pronouncement stories was recognized, and under the direction of Vernon Robbins, the pronouncement story group assumed the task of integrating chreia studies with its investigation of the stories about Jesus.

A second discovery of significance for the stories of the Synoptic Gospels also was made at an early time in the course of the Chreia Project. In the Progymnasmata of Hermogenes dating from the third century C.E., an example of an exercise on the chreia was called an "elaboration." Eight items were to be included in a pattern of argumentation that expanded upon the saying in the chreia. By following the pattern, a unit of speech could be composed in support of the chreia's meaning. The items were registered in short-hand designations of types of argument customarily discussed in the advanced handbooks of rhetoric. A careful study of these items and of their pattern in the exercise of Hermogenes led to the formulation of a theory capable of elucidating the logic lying behind the elaboration. Fortified with this theory, it was possible to recognize chreiai in the context of various literature of the period and to analyze the logic of contiguous material in those contexts. It was then that another look at the pronouncement stories in the Gospels recommended itself.⁷

The Gospels did not contain many abbreviated chreiai corresponding to the textbook definition in which a single saying served as a one-liner spoken in response to a briefly described situation. Instead, most pronouncement stories embellished the circumstances in which Jesus found himself, and after a first rejoinder, developed little speeches or truncated dialogues in which Jesus finally made his pronouncement. Much of the speech material consisted of proverbs, parables and other forms of analogic, metaphoric or aphoristic sayings. In the tradition of New Testament scholarship, such a "cluster" of proverbial material usually had been accounted as the product of accretion, finding a convenient place to tack another isolated saying of Jesus in the interest of collection. Comparing these clusters of sayings with the pattern of elaboration, however, outlines of rhetorical design began to emerge. The pronouncement stories were actually elaborated chreiai whose logic appeared in study of the rhetorical handbooks.

This essay will introduce the reader to essential information about the elaboration of chreiai in ancient rhetorical education and in the pronouncement stories of the Synoptic Gospels. It will unfold in three divisions: 1) a description of the chreia, noting the reasons for its attractiveness in rhetorical education; 2) a presentation of the elaboration pattern in Hermogenes and an explanation of the logic of its argumentation; and, 3) an application to the pronouncement stories, indicating the

significance of rhetorical analysis for a reconstruction of the Jesus traditions.

I. THE CHREIA AND THE PROGYMNASMATA

The Chreia

Rhetors defined the chreia as a concise statement aptly attributed to a specific character. They distinguished chreiai from maxims that were not so attributed, as well as from reminiscences that did not come to focus in a concise statement. A feature frequently present, moreover, was a brief description of the occasion for the statement, often expressed as a challenging situation or a question put to the speaker by some second party. As a result, the statement took the form of a response to the situation. Various modes of response were possible, from moralizing rejoinder to clever repartee and witty reposte. A good chreia would be succinct, anecdotal and memorable.⁸

Theon's chapter on the chreia contains many examples. Some are given here in order to establish the genre:

Diogenes the philosopher, on being asked by someone how he could become famous, responded: "By worrying as little as possible about fame."⁹

Theano the Pythagorean philosopher, on being asked by someone how long after intercourse with a man does a woman go in purity to the Thesmophorion, said: "With your own, immediately; with another's, never."¹⁰

Socrates, on being asked whether the Persian king seemed happy to him, said: "I can't say, for I can't know where he stands on education."¹¹

The character is named, the question posed and the response given. The Greek love for telling-insight, wit and clever rejoinder surfaces quickly.

The first effect upon the listener is akin to humor, but the point is scored, and beneath the surface exists a firm position in regard to serious philosophical and ethical issues. The listener must catch the point and match the philosophical position implied with the character named. If the attribution was apt, the chreia was judged appropriate. The function of the chreia was not primarily to offer instruction but to add to the characterization of a well-known figure and to explore the application of their philosophical position to some situation in life. Chreiai played the gaps between speech and character on the one hand, and between theory and practice on the other.

Searching outside the Progymnasmata, one is struck by the number of chreiai attributed to famous philosophers,

especially those recognized as founders of philosophical schools. Chreiai were not limited to philosophers. There was a strong tradition of Spartan sayings, and chreiai were regularly attributed to commanders and kings in the Moralia and Lives of Plutarch. Yet, the large number of chreiai in the Lives of Eminent Philosophers of Diogenes Laertius seems to represent the type of anecdote rhetors had in mind. That chreiai were told of leading philosophers is a mark of their popularity and respectability.

The attribution of chreiai to leading philosophers is also probable evidence for the oral tradition of Greek school philosophy in distinction from the high level of discourse characteristic for written treatises produced by the schools. Many of the chreiai in Diogenes Laertius rely upon exchanges between teachers and students, or between exponents of opposing schools of thought. Thus the chreia may have arisen in competition among the schools. Chreiai frequently manifest delight in the compromising situation, incongruous behavior and personal idiosyncracies of philosophers, features held to be incongruous with or challenging to a philosopher's application of their theoretical espousals to the ad hoc encounters of daily life. Many make their point by pitting a representative of one philosophical school against another in order to create two perspectives on a single situation or incident. Chreiai poked fun, explored limits and marked the differences among the various philosophical schools in the persons of their chief representatives, as seen in the following:

When he (Aristippus) had made some money by teaching, Socrates asked him, "Where did you get so much?" to which he replied, "Where you got so little."¹²

It is said also that Antisthenes, being asked to read publicly something that he had composed, invited Plato to be present. On his (Plato's) inquiring what he was about to read, Antisthenes replied that it was something about the impossibility of contradiction. "How then," said Plato, "can you write on this subject?"¹³

Plato had defined a human being as an animal, biped and featherless, and was applauded. Diogenes plucked a fowl and brought it into the lecture-room with the words, "Here is Plato's human being."¹⁴

Many chreiai take their point of departure from stock questions about the definition of values such as beauty, virtue, wealth or law. One finds short lists of truncated chreiai that highlight comparisons among the schools by a contrast of perspectives on a single definition. The following uses the definition of "good looks" to advantage:

Aristotle, they say, defined good looks as the gift of god, Socrates as a short-lived reign, Plato as

natural superiority, Theophrastus as a mute deception, Theocritus as an evil in an ivory setting, Carneades as a monarchy that needs no bodyguard.¹⁵

The Cynic Chreia

In the Lives of Diogenes Laertius, the chreia is used as a primary building block. It takes its place along with "apophthegms" of the "know thyself" variety, interesting character traits, reminiscences, nicknames, "doctrines," lists of written works and mentions of one's place of birth, family, teachers and students, as well as of the circumstances of one's death and some assessment of one's legacy. The long list of philosophers, from the seven sages on, were candidates for chreiai, and most of them received a few. But the chreia was clearly more at home in the Socratic and Cyrenaic traditions, and judging from the very large number of chreiai attributed to Cynics, must have been especially appropriate to their philosophy and character. This imbalance agrees with Theon's list of examples, which is also heavy with chreiai from the Cynic and Socratic traditions. Comparing the Cynic chreia with those attributed to philosophers in the traditions of the Academy or the Stoa, a remarkable difference can be noted.

A close look at examples of the two types of chreia will help to mark the critical difference between them. Examples from the Socratic and Cynic traditions follow:

(Socrates) used to say that he knew nothing except just the fact of his ignorance.¹⁶

(Socrates) said that, when people paid a high price for fruit which had ripened early, they must despair of seeing the fruit ripen at the proper season.¹⁷

Socrates the philosopher, when a certain student named Apollodorus said to him, "The Athenians have unjustly condemned you to death," said with a laugh: "But did you want them to do it justly?"¹⁸

Someone asked him (Socrates) whether he should marry or not, and received the reply, "Whichever you do you will repent it."¹⁹

"Many men praise you (Antisthenes)," said one. "Why, what wrong have I done?" was his rejoinder.²⁰

Being asked what was the right time to marry, Diogenes replied, "For a young man not yet; for an old man never at all."²¹

To one reproaching him (Diogenes) for entering unclean places he said, "The sun, also, enters the privies but is not defiled."²²

When one of his students said: "Demonax, let us go to the Asclepium and pray for my son," he replied: "You must think Asclepius very deaf, that he can't hear our prayers from where we are."²³

With these may be compared the following examples from philosophers in the Academic and Stoic traditions:

A story is told that Plato once saw someone playing at dice and rebuked him. And, upon his protesting that he played for a trifle only, said "But the habit is not a trifle."²⁴

To the question, "What do people gain by telling lies?" his (Aristotle's) answer was, "Just this, that when they speak the truth, they are not believed."²⁵

To a stripling who was talking nonsense his (Zeno's) words were, "The reason why we have two ears and only one mouth is that we may listen the more and talk the less."²⁶

He (Zeno) used to say, "Well-being is attained by little and little, and nevertheless it is no little thing."²⁷

An aspect of cleverness attends all of the sayings. With the Academic and Stoic chreiai, though, one easily can see a moralism behind the response. But, the Socratic and Cynic chreiai, grounded in the critique both of convention and of the construction of philosophical systems, make their point by subverting the logic common to the culture. The way in which they do this requires some clarification.

The chreia of Demonax (see above) at first appears to recommend a piety based upon a pantheistic theology. Cynics did appeal to "nature" (physis [φύσις]) as an order of reality more fundamental than that of human convention or legislation (nomos [νόμος]). It was also possible for the Greeks to equate the natural order with the realm of the divine. But Cynics were less disposed to the construction of other religious systems, more to the criticism of prevailing ones. The chreia thus is typical for those of the Cynic type, since Demonax is caught in a very embarrassing situation. Not only is he confronted with conventional piety related to a religious institution, also he is pressured into taking it seriously for the sake of his companion. To retain the Cynic posture of critique, Demonax must escape the obligation by turning his companion's expectation on its ear. He does this by clever rejoinder:

Suggestion: Let us go to the Asclepium and pray.
Rejoinder: You think where we are he is deaf.

Three contrasts are made and aligned. The first is the point of departure--that between the Asclepium (there) and

where we are (here). Since the companion wants to go there and pray, the first contrast results in the second--that between praying there (as if Asclepius hears) and not here (as if Asclepius were deaf). That leads to a third contrast between the companion's practice ("Let us go") and his belief ("You think"). The result is the insinuation that "the action you propose is not supported by the beliefs you hold." This creates a momentary confusion about the contradiction, a moment of confusion long enough for the Cynic to escape the trap. A subversion of the companion's conventional logic is just the point of the chreia.

Most Cynic chreiai utilize such subversion. In Diogenes' chreia about the sun "entering" the privies without becoming defiled, the Cynic strategy is especially obvious. The reproach was that Diogenes visited "unclean" places, i.e., socially unacceptable locales such as places of prostitution. Diogenes does not deny the charge, but confounds the conventional logic by means of an analogy in which contact with the unclean does not defile. The analogy assumes the charge of uncleanness, but shifts from the social to the natural order, where the charge does not apply. The shift to another order of discourse is a typical ploy of Cynic chreia. It isolates an assumption fundamental to the reasons behind the challenge, and then points to another set of circumstances in which the logic of the reasons does not fit. The strategy is merely clever. Diogenes' response does not engage the reasons for the reproach on their own terms, nor offer an alternative rationale for his contrary behavior. His rejoinder works by creating a momentary confusion in the application of the category "uncleanness."

The sagacity of the Cynic may now be given a name. In a recent study by Marcel Detienne and Jean-Pierre Vernant, Cunning Intelligence in Greek Culture and Society, a type of wisdom was identified throughout the history of the Greeks that worked much differently than the sophia (σοφία) of the dominant philosophic traditions for which the Greeks are better known. Detienne and Vernant coined the term metis (μῆτις) to designate this alternative wisdom. Whereas sophia is the kind of wisdom appropriate for the construction and analysis of stable systems, thus making classification and deduction possible, metis is the savvy required of contingent, accidental and changing situations. Metis is the sagacity necessary to survive in threatening and competitive circumstances.

Detienne and Vernant do not take their point of departure from the mythology of the goddess metis, Zeus's first wife, but from the meaning of the noun: "intelligent ability, practical skill, shrewdness, resourcefulness and cunning." They point to the use of the term in Nestor's instruction of Antilochus in Iliad 23, where Antilochus wins the chariot race against Menelaus by means of a cunning stratagem. They then trace a semantic word field associated with metis in Greek literature, as well as gather the metaphors and symbols of metis that regularly

occur. These include the net, knots, bindings, fish hooks, traps and crabs. Metis is needed whenever a stronger, more powerful opponent is met, a person or circumstance that threatens to entrap the weaker, vulnerable person. Using the illustration of the fight with nets, the less well-matched cannot afford a forthright advance. Instead, the weaker contender must watch for the moment of capture, feign vulnerability, then take advantage of the opponent's momentary overextension to grasp his net and throw it back over him, to win by a ruse. Metis, not sophia, was the kind of wisdom appropriate to physicians, navigators and rhetors. Each had to know the rules of the game as if the world were ordered, but also about timing and preparation to alter course in the midst of threatening, changing circumstances. Cynic chreiai manifest mētis at the level of rejoinder, a skillful use of words to escape entrapment by briefly confounding the superior sophia embedded in the dominant culture and assumed by the Cynic's antagonist.²⁸

The Chreia in the Progymnasmata

The rhetors found the chreia useful for reasons which now begin to unfold. The chreia encapsulated the essential elements of the speech situation--occasion, speaker and speech. Its prime characteristic, moreover, was the clever use of words to make a telling point (the "invention of an argument," according to the rhetors). Chreiai were also interesting and popular forms of speech, making them particularly appropriate for an introduction to rhetorical training. The use of popular and literary speech forms to introduce the student to rhetorical theory was pedagogically advantageous because it built upon material already familiar to the student from the general course of secondary education. From the various forms of popular and literary composition used by the rhetors in the preliminary exercises, the chreia was used for the very first lessons.

The Progymnasmata are to be distinguished from the classical handbooks of rhetorical theory known as Technai (τέχναι). The major extant Technai of the classical periods are the Rhetorica ad Alexandrum of Anaximenes, the Ars Rhetorica of Aristotle, the Ad Herennium of Ps-Cicero, several works by Cicero, the works of Quintilian and the works of Hermogenes. All are available in the Loeb Classical Library, except Hermogenes. The Technai were compendia of rhetorical theory for teachers, rhetors and other theoreticians advanced in the profession. They assumed readers with a general knowledge of rhetorical practice, and thus discuss few preliminary matters concerning the learning of rhetoric. The Progymnasmata belong to this tradition of writing handbooks for the practice of rhetoric, but they are structured differently. This is because their purpose was strictly pedagogical. The Progymnasmata were teaching guides for the instruction of students at the post-secondary stage of education just entering the professional school of rhetorical training. The major extant Progymnasmata are those of Theon (first century

C.E.), Hermogenes (third century) and Aphthonius (fourth century). English translations of Hermogenes and Aphthonius have been published by Baldwin and Nadeau. A translation of Theon based upon a new critical edition of the text has been prepared at Claremont by James Butts.

The Progymnasmata are divided into chapters numbering from ten in Theon to fourteen in Aphthonius. Thus, chapters were added in the course of the first few centuries, and they were slightly rearranged. Taking Theon as an example of the earlier arrangement, the chapter titles are as follows: anecdote (*χρεία*), fable (*μῦθος*), narrative (*διήγημα*), commonplace (*τόπος*), description (*ἐκφρασίς*), speech-in-character (*προσωποποιία*), encomium (*έγκώμιον*), comparison (*σύγκρισις*), thesis (*θέσις*) and the introduction of a law (*νόμος*). As the titles show, each chapter focuses upon a particular form of composition. The typical chapter begins with a definition of the speech form by pointing to essential characteristics in comparison and contrast with other closely related forms. Then follows a brief outline of the form's major subtypes. Examples may be given, as well as suggestions to the teacher for collecting one's own anthology of good examples from the canons of literature and rhetoric. With the speech form in place, the discussion then turns to the classroom exercises appropriate to the form.

Analysis of the Progymnasmata as a whole reveals a clear educational design. The design took the student from more familiar and simpler material to the more difficult. Three observations can be made about graded sequences. The first is that the first exercises were performed on popular and literary forms of composition, not on technically rhetorical forms of speech. The second observation is that the exercises moved the student through small units of literary composition (chreia, fable, narrative), through subsections of the standard speech form (commonplace, speech-in-character, description, comparison) to larger compositions approximating the major speech types (encomium, law, thesis).

A third observation cannot be illustrated from the arrangement of the chapter titles, because it must be drawn from the types of exercise suggested for each speech form. The earlier exercises were heavily analytical in purpose, while the later demanded more creative and compositional skill. The pedagogy overall was based upon the notion of learning through imitation. Thus there was marked emphasis upon memory, recitation, copying and the analysis of pre-given material. The objective, however, was to hone the student's capacity for making critical judgments, for learning to devise suitable arguments ("invention") and eventually for composing one's own speeches.

In the course of the Progymnasmata the student learned about the three major types of rhetorical speech: 1) the deliberative speech in its forms as declamation of thesis

and as introduction of legislation; 2) the forensic speech in its classroom forms as the commonplace and the comparison; and, 3) the epideictic speech in the form of an encomium. The student also learned basic skills in the analysis of issues (quaestio; στάσις), the building of a persuasive case (inventio), practice in composing material appropriate to the various parts of the standard speech outline (exordium, narratio, argumentatio, conclusio), exercises in the argumentation of "confirmation" (κατασκευή) and rebuttal (ἀνασκευή), and consideration of style (including figura), diction (λέξις) and delivery.

Theon suggested the following exercises for chreiai: 1) recitation (ἀπαγγελία); 2) inflection (κλίσις); 3) commentary (ἐπιφώνησις); 4) critique (ἀντιλογία); 5) expansion (ἐπεκτείνειν); 6 condensation (συστέλλειν); 7) refutation (ἀνασκευή); and, 8) confirmation (κατασκευή). The list consists of eight exercises which may be reduced to four sets of complementary pairs. Of these four sets, two sets generally address basic skills in style and delivery (recitation/inflection; expansion/condensation), and the other two sets address basic skills in argumentation (commentary/critique; refutation/confirmation).

Classroom practice must have been very demanding. Every exercise, no matter how rudimentary, required skills that had been highly rationalized in the tradition of rhetorical theory. Even upon the occasion of a student's first recitation of a memorized chreia, a teacher's critical remarks about "clarity" as a prime category in theory on delivery may have been forthcoming. Or perhaps the possibility of "paraphrasing" would be introduced with the request that the student try again "in other words." As soon as the student got it right, the teacher may have explained that when using chreiai in the context of real speeches, changes in subject, person and tense might need to be made--therefore the lessons on "inflection," etc. Soon, however, the matter of argument had to be joined, and for this purpose the student had to begin the arduous task of learning to apply critical theory. Critical theory was made available to the student in the form of small lists of "topics" taken from the technical handbooks.

Theon gives fine examples of the way in which critical theory could be used in an exercise on the chreia. The list of categories suggested for "refuting" a chreia is found in the "Introduction" above. It now may be observed that the list is composed of a short selection of categories taken from much longer lists of "topics" in the technical handbooks. Theon's selection of nine items actually combines types of topics, including dictional, logical and ethical categories. "Topics" referred to "places" in the classification of categories "from which" the experienced rhetor could "find" (εύπεστις) and "invent" (inventio) arguments. The impression one has is that these lists of topics, classified by type of rhetorical function, were

memorized for use as checklists for surveying the options available at a given juncture of composition or debate.

In the list of nine items for refuting the chreia, the dictional categories are 1) obscure (ἀσαφῆς), 2) excessive (πλεονάζων) and incomplete (έλλειπων). The logical are 4) impossible (ἀδύνατος), 5) implausible (ἀπίθανος) and 6) false (ψευδῆς). The ethical are 7) disadvantageous (ἀσύμφερος), 8) useless (ἄχρηστος) and 9) shameful (αἰσχρός). From the discussion that follows, it is clear that the student was to have this list in mind when presented with a chreia. The student's task was to review the list, to analyze the chreia with each in mind, and then to say how the categories might apply. The exercise was at first purely analytical, and the procedure was ad seriatim. The categories easily could be turned into their opposites, however, in order to form a list of topics from which a chreia might be "confirmed." Since the pattern of elaboration in Hermogenes functions to "confirm" the chreia, Theon's discussions of "commentary" and "confirmation" of chreiai are especially relevant to our purposes.

For the commentary, Theon suggests a list of four items. If the chreia is "approved," one may note that it is true (ἀληθῆς), honorable (καλός), advantageous (συμφέρων) and that its thought has been expressed in a similar saying by some other person of distinction.²⁹ This list combines two major types of categories to be used in building arguments. Each type requires a brief explanation.

The first three items are taken from lists of the "final categories" (τελικὰ κεφάλαια). According to Aristotle, the forensic speech as a whole was an argumentation determined ultimately by the category of "what was right" (τὸ δίκαιον); the deliberative speech by "the advantageous" (τὸ συμφέρον); the epideictic speech by "the honorable" (τὸ καλόν).³⁰ The idea was that persuasion finally rested upon the correlation of the speaker's construction upon a particular case with the culturally shared values indicated by the categories. Cultural codes ranged from actual legal codes, through accepted social conventions, to popular ethical and philosophical ideals. In the rhetorical handbooks one finds standard lists of these "final courts of appeal," usually consisting of about eight items. Anaximenes' list of eight categories are as follows: that which is right (δίκαιος); lawful (νόμινος); advantageous (συμφέρων); honorable (καλός); pleasant (ήδύς); easy (ράθιος); feasible (δυνατός); and, necessary (ἀναγκαῖος).³¹

The fourth item in Theon's list of comments upon a chreia was taken from a class of "supporting arguments" (ἐπιχειρήματα). The citation of an ancient authority was known as a "previous judgment." In a forensic argument such a citation most probably would have been a precedent decision. But in a deliberative speech, the authority was more properly taken from the canons of ethical and philosophical literature.

The list of four items could have been easily memorized by Theon's students. The application to a given chreia, however, would have required considerable ingenuity. The example Theon gives is a commentary upon the saying of Euripides, "that the mind of each of us is a god." Using the list of items, the student needed to find (invent) four "arguments" in support of the chreia, then string them together thematically in order to compose a small speech. The example Theon gives is instructive:

Euripides the poet said that "the mind of each of us is a god."

1) For the mind in each of us is truly (*ὄντως*) a god, encouraging us toward things that are advantageous (*συμφέρειν*) and keeping us away from things that are injurious.

2) For it is noble (*καλός*) that each considers god not to reside in gold and silver but in himself.

3) So that, by supposing that punishment is not far distant, we might not have much tolerance for wrong doing.

4) "For the mind of earthly men is like the day which the father of men and gods sends them."

The numbers indicate Theon's correlation with the four items in order. Note that the categories in question need not be mentioned explicitly in the arguments. Only in the case of the second item is the pertinent term actually used (*καλός*). The use of *συμφέρειν* in the first argument (intended to demonstrate the chreia's "truth," not its advantage) cleverly anticipates the third argument, which does spell out the advantage. The advantage given, moreover, considers the avoidance of wrong doing and punishment, a matter more properly associated with the category of *δίκαιος*. Theon did not refer to *δίκαιος* in the list of four items, substituting "true" for "right," because the chreia renders an ethical or philosophical, not a forensic, judgment. He nevertheless builds an argument for "the god within" that ultimately relies upon the category of "the right," a point easily made clear to students in the discussion that would have followed. Thus Theon's list is composed of the three major *τελικὰ κεφάλαια* plus a primary instance of a supporting argument, in this case a citation from the poet par excellence, Homer.³²

Theon does not give an example of the exercise on "confirmation," suggesting instead that the teacher turn to the chapter on the thesis in order to find the appropriate categories for the lesson. In the chapter on the chreia he does mention that such a lesson is intended for advanced students and that the arguments should be arranged "in order": "After the introduction, one should set forth the chreia itself; then, in order, the arguments."³³ Turning to the chapter on the thesis, one finds that, not only chreiai, but maxims, proverbs, apophthegms, stories and encomia may be used. Then, a very long list of twenty-three topics is given, which includes 1) a full set of the

"final categories," 2) a fairly full set of "supporting arguments," plus 3) random selections from other, less organized, frequently lengthy lists of topics and techniques for devising arguments.³⁴ As it appears, the more advanced student was confronted with fuller lists of ever more specialized and intricate categories for inventing arguments, and was now expected to produce with a sizable number in support of a chreia taken as a thesis for elaboration. This evidence documents the prehistory of the elaboration exercise in Hermogenes.³⁵

The Approved Chreia

Before turning to Hermogenes, however, there is an important matter to consider regarding Theon's preference for "approved" chreiai in the exercises on commentary and confirmation. The commentary, he says, "is possible for those who approve (ἀποδέχεσθαι) of what has been said properly (οἰκεῖως)."³⁶ In the thesis chapter he cautions that the sayings appropriate for theses are those which are "helpful" (χρήσιμος).³⁷ Sayings used as supporting arguments should be from "approved" persons (δεδοκιμάσμενοι).³⁸ Some chreiai cannot be used for the exercises in critique because "many have been expressed properly and faultlessly"; others cannot be praised at all because they involve "outright absurdity."³⁹ The issue here is complex. Distinctions among types of chreia are made with respect to at least two criteria. One is the basis upon which "approval" is granted; the other judges a chreia's appropriateness for only certain kinds of exercises.

In the introductory chapter to Theon's Progymnasmata there is a very revealing statement: "Indeed, the chreia exercise produces (ἐπράξεσθαι) not only a certain facility with words, but a good character (χρηστὸν ἡθος) as well, if we work with apophthegms of the sages."⁴⁰ This statement puts us in touch with a first-century discussion and concern about the ethical influence of literature, and especially of the sayings and speeches from the literary traditions. There are a number of fine discussions from this time about the relationship of speech to character and the effectiveness of reading, memorizing and "imitating" the sayings of the sages. Theon's concern for approved persons and their sayings can be understood in this larger, cultural context. Paideia (παιδεία), in its twin forms as "culture" and "education," was assuming the question of the relationship of literature to ethics. Rhetoric in its engagement of a literary culture, was turning the corner from the "first" to the "second sophistic." Theon's concern was that rhetoric be used, not to jockey for private interests, as was the case in the "first sophistic," but to support cultural conventions and inculcate conventional virtues. "Approved" chreiai, therefore, would be those that contained maxims and moralisms "useful for life" (βιωφελῆς).⁴¹ While Theon did not expressly develop a system of classification to distinguish between the two types of chreiai discussed above, the chreiai of which he

approved would have fallen largely within the class of moralistic maxims from non-Cynic philosophers. It is significant, for example, that Theon chose a theological moralism from Euripides for the exercise on commentary.⁴²

Nevertheless, Theon's chapter on the chreia makes full use of chreiai from the Socratic and Cynic traditions. This indicates the "usefulness" of the Cynic-type chreia in the earlier history of the Progymnasmata, a function with which Theon was still in agreement. Reading closely, however, one discovers that this type of chreia was used by Theon mainly to illustrate analytical and critical exercises, not for those that were designed to "praise," "recommend" or "confirm." The reasons for Theon's assignment of only certain chreiai to the contrasting exercises of "confirmation" and "refutation" now is clear. Cynic-type sayings were useful for exercises aimed at critical analysis and refutation; ethical maxims were preferred for exercises in confirmation. The importance of this correlation between types of chreiai and types of exercises will become clearer as the essay develops.

II. THE PATTERN OF ELABORATION

The Chreia Exercise in Hermogenes

A shift in emphasis occurs when one turns from Theon to Hermogenes. In Hermogenes' chapter on the chreia there is no longer any mention of eight separate exercises as Theon gives them. Instead, following a very brief discussion of the chreia as a speech form, Hermogenes presents a single exercise to be performed. The exercise corresponds to Theon's commentary and to his suggestions about use of approved chreiai to construct a thesis. It is not surprising that the chreia selected by Hermogenes for confirmation was a traditional moralism about education, here attributed to Isocrates, famous as the founder of a school of rhetoric.⁴³ The text is as follows:

But now let us move on to the chief matter, and this is the elaboration. Accordingly, let the elaboration be as follows: (1) First, an encomium, in a few words, for the one who spoke or acted. Then (2) a paraphrase of the chreia itself; then (3) the rationale.

For example, Isocrates said that the root of education is bitter, but its fruit is sweet.

1) Praise: "Isocrates was wise," and you amplify the subject moderately.

2) Then the chreia: "He said thus and so," and you are not to express it simply but rather by amplifying the presentation.

3) Then the rationale: "For the most important affairs generally succeed because of toil, and once they have succeeded, they bring pleasure."

4) Then the statement from the opposite: "For ordinary affairs do not need toil, and they have an outcome that is entirely without pleasure; but serious affairs have the opposite outcome."

5) Then the statement from analogy: "For just as it is the lot of farmers to reap their fruits after working with the land, so also it is for those working with words."

6) Then the statement from example: "Demosthenes, after locking himself in a room and toiling long, later reaped his fruits: wreaths and public acclamations."

7) It is also possible to argue from the statement by an authority.

For example, Hesiod said: "In front of virtue gods have ordained sweat."⁴⁴

And another poet says: "At the price of toil do the gods sell every good to us."⁴⁵

8) At the end you are to add an exhortation to the effect that it is necessary to heed the one who has spoken or acted.

So much for the present; you will learn the more advanced instruction later.

Numbers have been added in order to register the items that belong to the elaboration pattern.

Hermogenes' exercise is called an elaboration (*έργασία*), and it follows a definite pattern. The elaboration pattern consists of eight rhetorical topics indicated by shorthand codes. The codes are 1) praise (*έπαινος*), 2) chreia (in paraphrase), 3) rationale (*αίτια*), 4) opposite (*τὸ ἐναντίον*), 5) analogy (*παραβολή*), 6) example (*παράδειγμα*), 7) authoritative citation (*κρίσις*) and 8) exhortation (*παρακλησία*). The eight items form a set pattern, and the example elaboration shows that the pattern should result in a unified discourse, beginning with an introduction of the speaker and ending with an exhortation to heed his words. Each item requires a brief explanation, and the pattern as a whole must be analyzed.

1) Praise. Praise was the principle purpose of the epideictic speech or encomium. Though the elaboration of the chreia is not primarily a eulogy of the author, praise is appropriate at the beginning, because it was important to establish the character or ethos (*ἦθος*) of the speaker in the introduction to any speech. The rhetors regularly mentioned the triad ethos, logos and pathos (*πάθος*) as three general modes of persuasion appropriate to the introduction, body and conclusion of a speech. The introduction (*προοίμιον*; *exordium*) often was discussed as the first of four major divisions in the standard speech outline.

2) Chreia. The chreia is cited or paraphrased as the statement of the case to be argued or the thesis to be defended. It corresponds to the second major division of the standard speech form, the "narrative" (*διήγησις*;

narratio), in which a delineation of the issue (*στάσις*) was given.

3) Rationale. The rationale serves to clarify the issue by translating the chreia's metaphor into a discursive statement of the principle involved.

4) The Opposite. The logic of the principle proposed is confirmed if the statement of the opposite also is true. This agrees with rhetorical theory understood as the application of dialectic to the human orders of contingent probabilities. The statement of the opposite verifies and concludes the narratio in which the case or thesis has been established.

5) Analogy. The analogy occurs regularly in lists of the primary means for developing a supporting argumentation (*ἐπιχειρήματα*). Here it functions as a "proof," and its place in the pattern announces that the third main section of the speech has begun (*πίστις*; confirmatio).

6) Example. According to Aristotle, the example was one of the most basic forms of proof.⁴⁶ It governed the logic of induction typical for rhetorical investigation, and was therefore regularly included with the analogy in lists of the main types of supporting arguments.

7) Judgment. The citation of a precedent decision originally belonged to the proofs that were important for the forensic speech. The legal decision often was listed among the proofs that need not be "invented" (*ἄπειρνος*) by the rhetor. These included legal documents and evidence pertinent to the case. The testimony of a witness also counted as a noninvented argument. By means of a shift from the arena of law to the sphere of deliberative rhetoric, the inclusion of the category of "judgment" in the pattern of elaboration added yet another primary form of proof to the section on supporting arguments, and brought it to a conclusion. The shift to deliberative rhetoric caused the "judgment" to be sought among the "witnesses" to the truth of the chreia within the culture's literary traditions.

8) Exhortation. The fourth main division of the standard speech outline was the conclusion (*ἐπίλογος*; conclusio). It was customary at the conclusion to engage in pathos in order to win the agreement of the audience. The exhortation is a form of pathos appropriate to the deliberative speech, and in the case of the elaboration pattern, forms a period by reference back to the point intended by the author of the chreia now confirmed.

Analysis of the eight items shows that the shorthand terminology is highly technical and that the set can be marked to correspond to the four main divisions of the standard speech outline. These observations suggest that the pattern encapsulates fundamental procedures in the development of an argumentation. Such observations are not

sufficient, however, to answer further questions about the reasons for the selection of just these items to form the pattern. An additional investigation will be necessary to discover the logic of the selection of items for the set.

The Complete Argument

Rhetorical theory distinguished among forensic, deliberative and epideictic speeches. According to Aristotle, the forensic speech was concerned with accusation and defense of charges with respect to an action of the past, and was governed by the categories of the "just" and "unjust." The deliberative speech had as its purpose to exhort or dissuade with respect to a policy about the future, and it was governed by the twin categories of the "advantageous" and "harmful." The epideictic speech brought praise or censure to bear upon some person, institution or occasion in the present, and argued in terms of the "noble" and the "disgraceful."⁴⁷

Theoretically, each of the three speech situations (courtroom, assembly, public occasion) confronted the speaker with a particular kind of audience as "judge" (κρίτης), and required a particular kind of argumentation. The epideictic speech was an occasion for display, celebrating the "virtues" of some person or institution with an agreeable audience. The encomium, therefore, need not engage in argumentation of the forensic or deliberative kind. It was sufficient to trace the genealogy and history of the one praised, using generalized comparisons to heighten the sense of superiority, eulogize achievements and call for acclaim. In the classical handbooks the encomium was not given major attention. Dutifully ranked among the three major speech types, it nevertheless came in third for discussion, a discussion that frequently digressed into a section on matters of style.

Persuasion by argument therefore was achieved primarily with the forensic and deliberative speeches in mind. Both demanded putting a specific construction upon some action and a careful selection of reasons to prove or recommend it. The difference between them lay mainly in the sphere of discourse that each addressed. The decisions required by the court of law were more narrowly prescribed than those open to the assembly. Forensic theory delved into extremely fine distinctions for determining the legal issue in a case and very subtle techniques for the arrangement of arguments. The theory of deliberative rhetoric, on the other hand, assumed the entire range of cultural conventions and values as its "constitution," and required techniques to address an audience of diverse opinions and interests. The forensic situation tested the critical skills of the lawyer; the deliberative situation required the rhetorical skills of the orator.

The technical handbooks reflect these differences. The standard speech outline was developed mainly with the for-

ensic speech in mind. It had four sections: 1) introduction (*προσιμιον*; *exordium*); 2) statement of facts in the case (*διήγησις*; *narratio*); 3) arguments or proofs (*πίστις*; *confirmatio*); and, 4) conclusion (*ἐπίλογος*; *conclusio*). Of the four divisions, however, importance was attached only to the two middle sections, for it was here that the arguments unfolded. The purpose of the introduction was merely to establish the speaker's credibility (*ethos*), while the *pathos* of the conclusion might best remain until the "second" speech in keeping with the tradition of rebuttal. Critical was the statement of the case (2), for it was here that the lawyer defined the issue (*οτάσις*; *quaestio*) and proposed its resolution (*εἰκός*; *propositio*). Reasons then were given to support the recommended verdict (3).

The handbooks devote major attention to the theory and types of argument required of both sections. The influence of the forensic situation is particularly clear in the distinction mentioned above between the "nontechnical" proofs (*ἄτεχναι*) and those that had to be "invented" (*εὑρεσις*; *inventio*). The nontechnical proofs included basic evidence, sworn testimony, witnesses, documents, laws and precedent decisions. Though mentioned regularly in the handbooks, such proof did not require lengthy analysis. Those proofs that the lawyer had to invent in support of his proposition, on the other hand, received extensive discussion.

Since the skills required by the deliberative and forensic speeches overlapped primarily at the point of constructing arguments in support of a given proposition, major portions of the classical handbooks were designed for use in either situation. The handbooks regularly contained sections on the nature of rhetoric, types of proof and argumentation, kinds of speeches, arrangement, style, tropes and delivery. But classification was difficult for detailed matters that might be pertinent to several sections, especially matters of argumentation. Subsections developed that were focused upon a particular technique or a specific problem, frequently ending with the proviso that the matter under consideration was applicable in general, not only to one speech circumstance. Thus, in spite of the fact that the overall outline of the typical handbook distinguished among the various forms of speech, discussions of argumentation applicable in general are to be found throughout. In practice, then, the three modes of persuasion drew upon a common fund of techniques, and it was understood that the rhetor might merge essential characteristics of two or more speech forms as required by the occasion. To learn how to praise or censure, for instance, might prove useful at times, even in a forensic situation.

The penchant for classification led to the list as the major principle for organizing discussion. The tendency was to define an issue, as for instance the matter of detecting fallacious arguments, list examples and explain the point in each case. Various kinds of lists evolved,

frequently referred to as "topics" or "places" where one might go to find an example of a particular kind of argument. The rhetors apparently were not concerned to distinguish among types of lists by name, for the term "topic" was used for several kinds. Some lists, however, did receive a name, as for instance the list of the "final objectives" mentioned in "Part I." Another, shorter list lay behind the pattern of elaboration, a list of the types of argument appropriate for the support or confirmation of a proposition. The list can be traced through the history of the handbooks and into the tradition of the Progymnasmata. In the period just prior to Theon a very important development of this list took place that helps to explain the logic involved in the elaboration of the chreia.

An early example of a short list of topics for argumentation is found in Anaximenes' Rhetorica ad Alexandrum.⁴⁸ It follows upon his list of the final categories to be used in the deliberative speech. He explains that further argumentation would employ 1) the similar ($\tauὸ ὁμοιον$), 2) contrast ($\tauὸ ἐναντίον$) and 3) previous judgments ($\tauὰ κεκριμένα$). The authorities from which judgments may be taken are "the gods, men of repute, judges or opponents." Anaximenes suggests that a persuasive deliberation can be constructed from these basic types of argument.

A late example of such a list is found in Hermogenes' treatise on invention, where he discusses the "Elaboration of Arguments."⁴⁹ The topics to be used are 1) analogy ($\piαραβολή$), 2) example ($\piαράδειγμα$), 3) the lesser ($\muικρότερος$), 4) the greater ($\muειζων$), 5) the same ($ἴσος$) and 6) contrast ($\ἐναντίος$). This list agrees with Anaximenes at the points of the analogy and the contrast. It omits judgment. The inclusion of the example, however, is significant, since it was another basic type of proof, which was closely related to the analogy, according to Aristotle.⁵⁰

Two examples may now be given from the Ad Herennium (first century B.C.E.). The first is called the "complete argument" and consists of five items: 1) propositio; 2) ratio; 3) confirmatio; 4) exornatio; and, 5) complexio.⁵¹ The first three items outline the steps necessary to establish the proposition. They correspond to the narratio of the speech outline. Of particular interest is the special mention of the ratio. The ratio is "a brief explanation" of the reason or truth of the proposition. It corresponds to the rationale in the elaboration pattern. Of more importance, however, is the list of arguments to be used in the section called exornatio. They are 1) analogy (simile), 2) example (exemplum), 3) amplification (amplificatio) and 4) judgment (iudicatio).⁵² This list mediates between those of Anaximenes and Hermogenes. If inserted into the outline of the complete argument at the point of the exornatio, a list of items results that approximates the pattern of elaboration. The item called amplification is a throw-away line, indicating that though

THE PATTERN OF ARGUMENTATION

THE STANDARD SPEECH FORM	THE SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS	THE SUPPORTING ARGUMENTS	THE COMPLETE ARGUMENTATION	AMPLIFICATION OF A THEME	THE PATTERN OF ELABORATION
I. <u>Exordium</u>					1. <u>Praise</u>
II. <u>Narratio</u>			1. <u>Propositio</u>	1. <u>Res</u>	2. <u>Chreia</u>
			2. <u>Ratio</u>	2. <u>Ratio</u>	3. <u>Rationale</u>
III. <u>Argumentatio</u>			3. <u>Confirmatio</u>	3. <u>Pronuntio</u>	
	b. <u>The Opposite</u>	d. The Same/ <u>The Opposite</u>		4. <u>Contrario</u>	4. <u>Opposite</u>
			4. <u>Exornatio</u>		
	a. <u>The Similar</u>	a. <u>Analogy</u>	a. <u>Simile</u>	5. <u>Simile</u>	5. <u>Analogy</u>
		b. <u>Example</u>	b. <u>Exemplum</u>	6. <u>Exemplum</u>	6. <u>Example</u>
		c. The Lesser/ The Greater	c. <u>Amplificatio</u>		
	c. <u>Judgments</u>		d. <u>Iudicatio</u>		7. <u>Judgment</u>
IV. <u>Conclusio</u>			5. <u>Complexio</u>	7. <u>Conclusio</u>	8. <u>Exhortation</u>
	(Anaximenes)	(Hermogenes)	(Ad Herennium)	(Ad Herennium)	(Hermogenes)

the outline is complete in the sense of including the main elements of a persuasive argument, it can be embellished.

The second example from the Ad Herennium is the outline for the development of a theme or thesis. There are seven items: 1) statement of the theme (res); 2) reason (ratio); 3) paraphrase of the thesis with or without the reason (pronuntio); 4) statement of the opposite (contrario); 5) analogy (simile); 6) example (exemplum); and, 7) conclusion (conclusio).⁵³ An illustration is given for the thesis that "the sage will shun no peril on behalf of the republic." It follows the steps and develops a fine paragraph as does the elaboration of the chreia in Hermogenes.

The Ad Herennium records the development that must lie behind Theon's commentary upon and confirmation of chreiai, the thesis exercise in Theon and Hermogenes' pattern of elaboration. The development may be understood as a reduction of the longer, more complex lists of proofs to their basic forms by selecting just the main elemental types of argument. This list of single-representative types then was arranged in keeping with functions appropriate to the major sections of the standard speech outline. The result was a pattern of argumentation that could be used for the development of a thesis in an educational context or for the composition of a declamation to be given in public. The reduction to a simple outline may have been performed in the interest of pedagogical purposes, but it was achieved by means of a critical and thorough assessment of the whole range of rhetorical theory. It marks as well a evolving transition from the practice of rhetoric primarily within the institutions of state to the performance of declamation in the public sphere.

A correlation of the several lists discussed with the elaboration pattern of Hermogenes appears here (see chart). Technically, the term elaboration should apply only to items 4 through 7 of Hermogenes' pattern, where the confirmation of the thesis takes place by means of the supporting arguments. That Hermogenes uses the term nonetheless to refer to the exercise as a whole may be taken as a sign that the pattern itself had become traditional.

The Logic of Elaboration

At first glance Hermogenes' illustration appears to be a rather crude stringing of loosely-related items. A closer reading shows, however, that each item was carefully chosen, the composition creative and the logic of the whole persuasive. The chreia is a saying of Isocrates about education:

Isocrates said that the root of education is bitter,
but the fruit is sweet.

1) There is to be a brief word of praise for Isocrates. This is appropriate for three reasons: 1) praise estab-

lishes ethos as required in any introduction; 2) it acknowledges that the student performing the elaboration is not the speaker of the chreia whose ethos is the more important; and, 3) it provides opportunity for linking the character of the speaker of the chreia with the theme of the chreia in keeping with the standard notion about matching character with speech. Hermogenes does not explicate this as the purpose of the brief word of praise, indicating only that one might begin by remembering that "Isocrates was a sage..." and so on. The student certainly would know more to say, however, for Isocrates was famous as the founder of rhetorical education, the very theme to be drawn from his chreia.

2) The chreia is to be given in paraphrase, making sure that its meaning comes through. This is important, because the recitation of the chreia is a statement of the thesis to be elaborated. Paraphrase would be most important in the case of aphoristic maxims or figurative language.

3) The rationale comes next:

For the most important affairs generally succeed because of toil, and once they have succeeded, they bring pleasure.

The rationale provides the "reason" why the chreia is true. It also restates the truth of the chreia in a form that can be argued, i.e., as a proposition. To make this move, the student would need to determine the "issue" embedded within the chreia and to find a generally valid proposition that addressed the issue. In this case the "issue" was the relationship between the "bitter root" and the "sweet fruit," a relationship left vague by the chreia's metaphor. The proposition interprets the metaphor as a statement about the fundamental relationship between "toil" and the success of important affairs. This is more than a restatement of the chreia. It translates the attributes of the metaphor (most probably the vine) into a principle of the necessity of the human activity involved in order to get from the "bitter root" to the "sweet fruit." The rationale plus chreia actually form a rhetorical syllogism (called an enthymême [ἐνθύμημα], a syllogism in which one of the propositions is left unstated). The rationale serves as the major premise (important affairs do succeed by toil); the minor premise is left unstated (education is an important affair); the chreia becomes the conclusion or the proposition to be proven (hard work at school will bring success).

But the rationale does more. By translating the "bitter root/sweet fruit" of the chreia into the sequence "labor first/then rewards," the rationale expressly announces a theme for the elaboration. It also takes the occasion to allude to one of the "final categories" by suggesting that the eventual success will bring "pleasure" (hēdonē (ἡδονή cf. ήδύς, "pleasant"). This is clever, because a point has

already been scored if the statement about the success of important affairs being pleasant is accepted (which it must be). A claim is made for the validity of the thesis in terms of a conventional value. If the proposition can be sustained with regard to education, the labor that education requires must certainly be judged worthwhile.

3) The Opposite. The statement of the opposite was designed to test the definition of a proposition by engaging in a bit of dialectical reasoning. Dialectical reasoning was dear to the Greeks and basic to their philosophical traditions. There were several ways in which "dialectical reasoning" could be employed in the standard argument of the opposite. In the present case, the statement of the opposite inverts the terms of the rationale. This tests the validity of the proposition, for the proposition gains in credibility if the opposite is recognized as true.

For ordinary affairs do not need toil, and they have an outcome that is entirely without pleasure; but serious affairs have just the opposite.

On the surface this statement might not appear convincing. There is, however, a nuance that makes the contrast a bit more plausible. The term for "ordinary affairs" (*τύχοντα*) is the kind of event that one "happens upon." *Tyxóv* carried the connotation of chanciness, which means that it could suggest happenstance without a pleasurable outcome, and was regularly so used. The contrast is made expressly with "serious affairs" by using the term *σπουδαῖα*, a term that associates excellence with earnestness. This becomes the "most important affairs" that succeed because of labor mentioned in the rationale. *Σπουδαῖος* was closely related to *καλός*, the term used for excellence as a final category, thus suggesting another claim for the virtue of important undertakings. Thus, one detects a stacking of connotations with good affairs defined by purpose, toil and pleasure on the one side, and chance affairs defined by happenstance and unhappiness on the other. The effect would not have been lost on third-century ears.

5) Analogy. By definition the analogy was to be taken from the world of common experience. Analogies were reminders of the way the world worked in general, especially in the spheres of the natural and human orders of activity. They were nonspecific in the sense that the figures indicated were representative and generic types. By referring to a class of persons or objects, or to a regular pattern of occurrence (such as what farmers, doctors or merchants do), the analogy pointed to a common phenomenon regarded as an instance of a universal principle. The effect of an apt analogy would be the suggestion that the principle stated in the proposition was the same as that implied in the familiar instance. If true of the analogy, it would be true for the proposition as well.

For just as it is the lot of farmers to reap their fruits after working with the land, so also is it for those working with words.

The analogy is most appropriate to the proposition derived from the chreia. The familiar figure of the farmer at work expands upon the chreia by naming the human activity implied by the "bitter root" and by using that activity to make the connection between the bitter root and the sweet fruit. This shows that the issue identified and addressed in the proposition is still in view. In keeping with the proposition, the point is made in the analogy that the cultivation of the land must precede the harvesting of the fruit. This principle, not expressed directly in the chreia but fundamental to the proposition, can hardly be denied in the case of the farmer. If farming is an analogy of "important affairs," the proposition gains plausibility.

The analogy of the farmer fits the rules of rhetoric, because it observes a common human activity that engages the natural order. Principles that apply in such cases gain universality by implicating the entire systems of the natural and human spheres of occurrence. The application is drawn, however, not merely to the general principle stated in the proposition, but to the specific activity of "working with words." Working with words is a euphemism for education, the reference of the metaphor in the chreia. Because the analogy is specifically related to education, one sees that the chreia continues as the point of departure for the elaboration. The analogy specifies a familiar instance of the principle stated in the proposition, but applies it to the specific case given with the chreia. The truth of the chreia is greatly enhanced if the principle of "toil first/rewards later" applies in all three orders of activity--nature, farming and education.

Thus the analogy serves as a "proof." Proving the truth of the chreia, however, does not exhaust the purposes of the elaboration. An elaboration must not only exegete all of the pertinent points of the chreia, it must also "work out" the ramifications of a chreia in its applications to life. In keeping with these purposes, each item in the pattern presents the occasion for explicating more precisely the chreia's themes. Just as the rationale was used to introduce the themes of toil and success, and the statement from the opposite was taken as the opportunity to introduce the importance of purpose, so the analogy is the occasion for reassuming the theme of education and for specifying it as "working with words." This continues the elaboration of the chreia by clarifying the nature of the labor in question. It is education in the fields of literature and rhetoric. The plot thickens as the point of the elaboration is poised to come home.⁵⁴

6) Example. By definition the example was to be taken from the arena of history. In distinction from the analogy, the example indicated a specific instance in the

life of a well-known individual. The purpose of the example was to show that the principle under review had been actualized in a concrete case. If the example was apt and persuasive, it could clinch the argument to the effect that the principle of the proposition did pertain to the order of activity claimed by the chreia.

Demosthenes, after locking himself in a room and toiling long, later reaped his fruits: wreaths and public acclamations.

The famous rhetor is chosen as the example. The stories about his long hours at the desk were well-known. Reference to these stories is combined in the example with an allusion to the equally well-known passage of his famous oration "On the Crown."⁵⁵ This bit of erudition would not have damaged the argument at all. But the force of it is just that the thesis of the chreia is demonstrable in a famous case of one who actually worked with words. The clever inclusion of an allusion to the canons of literature is a special touch, preparing the speaker for the next category of argumentation.

7) Judgment. The purpose of the judgment was to show that other recognized authorities had spoken similarly. In the case of deliberative argument about education, a citation from canonical literature would be appropriate.

For Hesiod said, "In front of virtue gods have ordained sweat."

And another poet (Epicharmus) says, "At the price of toil do the gods sell every good to us."

To find a pointed citation from Hesiod would have been considered fortunate indeed. His authority ranked with that of Homer, and he was known for his views on the virtues of work. The citation cleverly supports the contention of the proposition that work precedes reward. It also elaborates the theme climactically by introducing at last the value fundamental to Greek culture (paideia) and education (paideia), i.e., virtue.

The second citation serves as a slight denouement before concluding with the exhortation, though it is not without rhetorical significance. It forms a period for a theme that has been coursing through the elaboration, the theme of worthwhileness. That the rewards of labor are worthwhile has been indicated by a number of terms--success, pleasure, excellence, wreaths, public acclamations and virtue. Now the term "every good" ($\tau\alpha\ \alpha\gamma\alpha\theta\alpha$) is used, an all-encompassing term laden with both popular and philosophical connotation. It serves as a summary of the value theme, and ends the elaboration by emphasizing finally the "sweet fruit" of the chreia.

The citation from Epicharmus also underscores another point, however, a point that may have been overlooked in

the citation from Hesiod. That point is that the necessity of labor is grounded ultimately in the ordinance of the gods. This amounts to a theological argument, an appeal to the very structure of the world as the order of reality that can finally be elicited to argue for the truth of the proposition. With the citations presented, the argumentation is concluded, and the exhortation can be given.

8) Exhortation. The exhortation is given on the basis of the elaboration presented by the student. It will be phrased, however, not as a call to respond to the student, but to the author of the chreia. This forms a stylistic period with the introduction where it was emphasized that the speaker was Isocrates. Thus:

It is essential to heed him...

The force of the total argument may be analyzed briefly. An outline of basic moves in the construction of an argument and speech was expanded by means of a clever selection ("finding," "invention") of familiar and very mundane material. This material, however, was carefully phrased and arranged so as to elaborate the nuances of the chreia and to expand upon the arenas of experience in which it was seen to apply. The craftsmanship of the chreia was matched by a crafting of the supporting elaboration. Three observations can be made about the design of the whole.

The first observation is that occasions were found to play upon the "final categories," which were held to be prime objectives of deliberative rhetoric. None was mentioned expressly, but several received subtle allusion, including the pleasant (in the mention of pleasure), the good (in the mention of *euouðaîoc* and *τὰ ἀγαθά*), the necessary (in the mention of the "lot" of farmers, the Greek *δέῖ*), the feasible (in the example of Demosthenes) and the right (in the mention of "ordained by the gods"). The final categories represented commonly accepted values. By aligning the chreia with a number of them (only the "lawful," "advantageous" and "easy" were not used from the traditional listing), the force of its truth was supported. The express mention of virtue as the final reward garners the conventional values for culture and education.

A second observation on the design of the whole is that the outline serves as a chart for investigating all of the orders of human perception, experience and discourse. Such include the arena of logic or dialectic (argument from the opposite), the worlds of nature and human activity (analogy), history and its institutions (example) and literary tradition (judgment). That the judgments involved references to virtue and the gods may be taken as a fitting complement to this design, since they marshall the fields of philosophy and ethics as well. Taken together, there is precious little space left upon which to stand in dissent.

The third observation is that the process of elaboration results in a literary composition. It is clear that the elaboration forms a unit of argumentation, as is the fact that a period is formed by means of the introduction and conclusion of the speech. It now may be emphasized that the thesis was developed thematically by degrees. This happened because each item in the pattern was taken as the occasion for doing several things at once. Each item 1) referred back to the chreia for a fresh start in looking for yet another type of argument to fill the slot, 2) focused on yet another aspect of the chreia in need of explication and 3) drew upon previous statements in order to develop the thesis thematically. This was achieved by the repeated introduction of terms that moved the thesis toward ever greater specificity (the chreia is finally about hard work in the school of rhetorical education) and the clever choice of words that elaborated earlier applications outward, finally to encompass all of the imaginable world (the work/reward sequence is a principle that operates in all orders of reality).

Analyzed in this way, it is clear that an elaboration of a chreia required thought, skill and ingenuity. At the level of a student's exercise, such an elaboration would have been very demanding. Hermogenes relegates his illustration of the elaboration to the "preliminary" exercises by the remark that "more advanced instruction" will be forthcoming. When compared with Theon's chapter on the chreia, however, it can be seen that Hermogenes' exercise is already "advanced." This means that the chreia elaboration was upgraded in the course of the first three centuries. It was no longer an exercise in critical analysis and refutation. Instead, fully in keeping with the swing toward the second sophistic, an "approved" chreia was taken as the occasion for a confirmation of cultural and institutional values. Hermogenes' lesson, while demanding, was hardly designed for the rhetoric of social critique.

There is also evidence that the pattern came to be used not only by students in school, but by eminent orators, such as Libanius (fourth century C.E.). This should not be surprising. The pattern, in fact, simple as it was, could easily be used by anyone as a template for surveying the entire field of rhetorical theory. Its outline for composition, moreover, was comprehensive and interesting enough to invite full-blown declamations and treatises. Many of the fifty-one declamations of Libanius follow the elaboration pattern. They are lengthy, polished deliberations on theses of significance for his times. The lowly chreia and the preliminary exercises thus open a most interesting vista of the ancient world. If the pronouncement stories of the early Christian Gospels are elaborated chreiai as well, a fresh perspective on Christian origins may appear.

III. THE PRONOUNCEMENT STORIES IN THE GOSPELS

Although the Greek chreia bears the marks of birth in the oral tradition of school debate, the examples used by Theon no doubt were taken from current literature. Diogenes Laertius refers to collections of chreiai as his source for many of the examples he used in his Lives on the "Aristotelian" model, and Plutarch's works show that chreiai had become valuable as building-blocks for Lives on the model of the encomium, as well as for philosophical and ethical treatises. Whereas Diogenes Laertius used the chreia mainly for the purpose of establishing a philosopher's wit and wisdom, Plutarch used chreiai as exempla in the course of both narrative and discursive treatments of a protagonist's virtues and life. Embedded in a treatise and used to illustrate a significant point, chreiai in Plutarch are frequently embellished by internal description, expanded into brief dialogues and noted in order to align the point with the discourse of the treatise.⁵⁶

The evidence for the use of chreiai in biographic literature roughly contemporary with the Gospels is very helpful. It provides models for understanding the incidence and function of chreiai in the Gospels, and leads to fresh questions of their provenance, collection, circumstances of elaboration and role in the formation of the Gospels themselves. A brief survey of what has been learned about the chreiai of Jesus in the Synoptic traditions will highlight some of these questions.

The Pronouncement Story as Chreia

A report on the first phase of the work of the Pronouncement Stories Group of the Society of Biblical Literature appeared in 1981.⁵⁷ In that issue, Robert Tannehill identified thirty-two pronouncement stories in the Gospel of Mark and many more in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Using Tannehill's list, about two-fifths of the narrative material in the first twelve chapters of Mark consists of pronouncement stories. This establishes their importance for the Gospel's composition, and calls for a closer look.

As mentioned above, not many of these pronouncement stories have the chreia form as defined in the Progymnasmata and illustrated by Theon and Diogenes Laertius. They are, instead, longer narrative units of more complex speech approximating the use of chreiai in Plutarch. To use the rhetorical definition, they are elaborated chreiai. Having learned moreover about the practice of chreia elaboration, many of the chreiai embedded in the pronouncement stories can be reconstructed by bracketing the narrative amplifications and discursive elaborations. A look at three of the pronouncement stories of Jesus can illustrate the procedure and provide examples of the kind of chreia found in the Gospel traditions. They belong to the Cynic type.

- 1) The pronouncement story in Mark 2:15-17 reads

And as he sat at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners were sitting with Jesus and his disciples; for there were many who followed him. And the scribes of the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, said to his disciples, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?" And when Jesus heard it, he said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."

Scholarly opinion recognizes that much of the scene was embellished either in the course of the telling of this story or by Mark in the process of inserting the story into the Gospel. Jesus' response also shows that an addition has occurred in the transmission of this story. The response consists of two different kinds of assertion. The first uses a proverb that is well-attested in Greek literature, though the second is a statement of self-reference freighted with early Christian theology. If the setting is reduced to a minimal description with the early Christian interpretation bracketed, the following chreia emerges:

When asked why he ate with tax collectors and sinners, Jesus replied, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are ill."

The form of the chreia is clear. It has the structure of a Cynic chreia, and it uses the same kind of logic. The response counters an assumption implicit in the objection intended by the question, i.e., that tax collectors and sinners are "unclean" and that eating with them makes one "unclean." That the response counters this assumption can be illustrated by aligning the objection and the response:

O: (For Jesus) to eat with sinners (defiles)
R: For a physician to treat the sick (does not defile)

Jesus' response appears to agree with the objection that sinners and tax collectors are unclean. It shifts the order of discourse, however, to an instance where one who is with unclean people (the sick) does not become contaminated (according to proverbial lore about the physician from which the response is taken). This confounds the application of the category to the present situation upon which an entirely other construction has been placed. The momentary confusion lets Jesus "escape" from the charge.

2) The pronouncement story in Mark 7:1-23 is a very elaborate construction, too long to cite and analyze in the context of this essay. Scholarly opinion, however, has frequently noted two things about the story that can be used to make a reconstruction plausible. Firstly, the setting has been greatly expanded in order to explain why the Pharisees objected to eating with hands defiled. This expansion had the effect of refocusing upon the Pharisees

as those who always washed in order to keep "the tradition of the elders." This changed the issue from (Jesus) eating with hands defiled to (the Pharisees) keeping the tradition of the elders. Since much of the ensuing argument assumes the issue of "the tradition of the elders," it can be bracketed as belonging to a later stage of elaboration. One then seeks for a rejoinder to the issue of eating with hands defiled. Verse 15 is a perfect candidate. Scholars have frequently noted that verse 15 is a peculiar saying in its present context and that much of what follows appears to be a very strained attempt to domesticate it for early Christian piety. Putting verse 15 together with the question about eating with hands defiled (and slightly paraphrasing), the following chreia is reconstructed:

When asked why he (they) ate with hands defiled, Jesus replied, "It is not what goes in, but what comes out of a person that makes unclean."

The humor is scatological, typically Cynic, but should not detract from the clever logic employed. Again, the issue is the codes of ritual purity as they apply to eating. The objection is that Jesus' failure to wash his hands makes eating an act that defiles. The response shifts the order of discourse from table manners to what happens to the food one eats. The usual confusion of categories occurs. For the moment the thought is allowed that it does not matter whether one washes one's hands, since putting food into the mouth is not where uncleanness resides. The saying is merely clever. It does not engage the reasons for the objection. But it does let Jesus off the hook.

3) The pronouncement story about Caesar's coin in Mark 12:13-17 is well-known. It also was embellished to fit the Markan theme of the plot by the Jewish authorities against Jesus. Interestingly, it is replete with the terminology of entrapment and testing, language reminiscent of metis and the Cynic chreia. Reducing the narrative and dialogue to its basic challenge and response, a chreia can be seen:

When someone showed him a coin with Caesar's inscription and asked, "Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" Jesus replied, "Give to Caesar Caesar's things, and to God, God's."

The story in Mark ends by saying that "they were amazed at him." The ending is appropriate to the logic employed, for Jesus does not answer the tricky question. He simply confounds the logic of its either/or assumption by shifting the order of discourse to engage another partially related conflict of loyalties. His metis kept him out of the trap. His questioners are brought to silence.

Most of the Jesus chreiai are of this type. Tannehill's study reached a similar conclusion using another system of classification. Of the thirty-two pronouncement stories in Mark, only two were found that omitted the elements of

"objection," "correction" or "testing." This conclusion is of some significance. Not only does it point to an arena of debate as the social situation of origin for these stories, it also questions the traditional view of these stories as didactic. If Jesus' pronouncements are mainly of the Cynic variety, what might that mean for the earliest stage of story-telling about Jesus and for the function of these stories in the Synoptic traditions?

Elaboration in the Pronouncement Stories

Using the pattern of elaboration as a guide, many of the sayings included in the stories of Jesus' pronouncements can be seen as arguments in support of a thesis. This is surprising for three reasons. One surprise relates to the traditional view of this material; two arise from knowing the practice of chreia elaboration in Greco-Roman culture.

- 1) Much of the sayings material clustered around the pronouncement stories is figurative and highly aphoristic. It has been customary to think of these sayings as originally isolated and "free-floating," collected in clusters merely by means of loose patterns of association in the interest of conserving the individual sayings. It has not been customary to account for these sayings as the "inventions" of proofs in support of a unified argumentation.
- 2) Judging from the type of chreia selected for elaboration in the *Ad Herennium*, Theon and Hermogenes, the Cynic style of rejoinder characteristic for the chreiai of Jesus would appear to be very difficult to "confirm."

- 3) Since the proofs to be used in the pattern of elaboration presuppose the acceptance of conventions, values and authorities common to the culture at large, they would seem to be inadequate for a new movement in the process of defining itself by contrast to that culture.

There are, in fact, several curiosities about the use of arguments in the pronouncement stories that indicate the difficulty early Christians had in accommodating the logic of elaboration to a novel *Ethos*. Well-known examples from the canons of Greek literature and from the Hebrew scriptures would have been difficult to use, embued as they were with cultural values eschewed by the new movement. The same caution would have been necessary with regard to authoritative citations from traditional literature. And allusions to the "final objectives" would have required care, making it necessary to recast their nuance in keeping with values appropriate to the new social formations.

In spite of the difficulties, however, the logic of elaboration did recommend itself as a way to establish and support theses of significance to the Jesus movements. The founder figure himself bore the weight of authority in these elaborations, and the analogy (*parabole*) was pressed to its limits in the effort to cover the range of support-

ing arguments. For instance, clever ways were found to use metaphors and similes to support nonconventional ideals. Compared with the elaboration of chreiai in Hellenistic tradition, the pronouncement stories thus manifest several peculiar features. In spite of the differences, however, the practice of elaboration is evident, and the pattern of elaboration appears to have been the predominant guide.

Before illustrating the use of elaboration in the pronouncement stories, one further consideration needs to be mentioned. In the collection of chreiai and their use in the composition of biographic literature, elaboration need not take the form of a classroom exercise or declamation. Brief chreiai might be used to advantage as well as rather full elaborations. A chreia frequently might be given with only a rationale or with only one or two supporting arguments. Even with a full elaboration, an encomiastic introduction of the speaker and an address to the listener in the conclusion would generally not be appropriate. In any case, the outline developed in the "complete argument" and practiced in the classroom was not understood even by the rhetors as a wooden frame restricting eventual, creative composition. Its purpose was constructive, providing a checklist of basic types of proof, as well as suggestions for arranging their sequences. That being the case, it is all the more surprising that the outline of the pattern as a whole is discernable in numerous pronouncement stories. The following examples are given as illustrations of the several ways in which chreiai were elaborated in the early traditions of Gospel formation.

1) Mark 2:15-17 is an example of a slightly expanded chreia. A reconstruction already has been given above by placing the amplification of the scene and the theological addition in brackets. These embellishments of the original chreia amount to a brief elaboration in which the addition of a single saying performs a multiple function.

The setting was expanded to specify the opponents as scribes of the Pharisees and the followers of Jesus as a social group constituted by table fellowship. The issue of debate thus pertains to the constitution of this social group. Those who object imply that the membership of this group violates and threatens their own social codes. This shows that the circumstance of elaboration was a social conflict marked by competing claims for legitimacy. The original chreia need not be read that way. In the original chreia Jesus' behavior was questioned as unconventional in much the same way as a Cynic's behavior might have been. Jesus' playful response about the physician shows that the charge was not taken with utmost seriousness. The expanded setting reflects a new social situation in which both the objectors and the followers of Jesus very seriously were concerned about the justification of this new group.

A rationale was added to the saying about the physician: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." The

rationale was derived from the logic implicit in the original chreia, but shifts the issue to a focus upon the social distinction between "the righteous" and "sinners." It makes explicit the distinction between the clean and unclean as a social code versus the charge of uncleanness taken seriously by the followers of Jesus as a threat to their own legitimacy. Uncomfortable about the charge of including "sinners" in their group, thus forfeiting the claim to being "the righteous," Jesus' followers turned his rejoinder into a principle of social self-definition.

The single addition of a rationale was standard practice for difficult chreiai, even in the Greek collections. It was usually appended, however, to ensure that the point of the chreia not be missed. In the case of Jesus' chreia, the rationale not only was used to "explain" the reason for the charge underlying the objectors' question, but also to clarify the issue, propose a thesis and develop a theme. That would have received high marks by a teacher of rhetoric. The author drew upon the image of the physician, erased any ambiguity about the purpose that may have accompanied a purely Cynic reading and justified Jesus' behavior as a founder of the society ("I came to call"), now composed of "sinners" who were nevertheless "right."

The use of irony continues the Cynic style of response and social critique. The critique, however, is no longer Cynic. The teasing invitation of the Cynic chreia, simply to reconsider the situation, was transformed into hardened polemic in the course of domestication. The image of the physician is no longer taken as a simile, but as an appropriate metaphor for Jesus as the founder of the group. The rationale explicates that the physician is not the only one who escapes the charge of becoming unclean. Those with whom he associates are also justified. They are the very ones he came to "call," not those who consider themselves righteous and therefore are no longer included. A highly rationalized social justification thus was read into the original chreia. The new social situation is also mirrored in the scene. There the opponents are depicted as asking, not Jesus, but his disciples about the practice of table fellowship. Jesus' function is to answer for the disciples as their champion. Thus the rationale serves as an authoritative citation after which nothing more need be argued.

2) Mark 2:18-22. The next story in the second chapter of Mark is also an elaborated chreia. The objection is raised that Jesus and his disciples do not fast, though John's disciples and the Pharisees do fast. Since there is other evidence that Jesus was remembered in contrast to John the Baptist (Jesus' behavior is reminiscent of a "hedonistic" Cynic; John's is described as that of the "ascetic" type), the chreia may stem from an early stage of reflection upon the distinction between the followers of Jesus and the followers of John.⁵⁸ A reconstruction of the chreia shows, in any case, that Jesus' response is of the Cynic variety.

When asked why he and his followers did not fast, Jesus replied, "Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them?"

The question about fasting is countered by a shift of the focus to an occasion on which fasting is fully inappropriate. The shift turns the question back upon the objectors by suggesting that they have not interpreted the occasion correctly. The shift employs the logic of *metis*, and the point of the chreia has no need of further clarification.

At some later juncture, however, this chreia received a rather full elaboration. Surprisingly, the elaboration follows the pattern suggested by the teachers of rhetoric.

1) Setting (Narrative Introduction)

Now John's disciples and the Pharisees were fasting; and people came and said to him, "Why do John's disciples and the disciples of the Pharisees fast, but your disciples do not fast?"

2) Chreia (Response)

And Jesus said to them, "Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them?"

3) Rationale

"As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast."

4) Opposite

"The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in that day."

5) Analogies

"No one sews a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; if he does, the patch tears away from it, the new from the old, and a worse tear is made."

And no one puts new wine into old wineskins; if he does, the wine is lost, and so are the skins."

7) Judgment

"But new wine is for fresh skins."

The rationale explains the reason implicit in the chreia's rejoinder: the guests "cannot" fast during the wedding, since it would violate the occasion, according to the codes governing weddings. The rationale, however, also domesticates the chreia by assuming that the bridegroom is Jesus and that the time of the wedding was during Jesus'

time. The domestication all but scuttled the point of the chreia, for lo and behold, the "Jesus people" are actually fasting. This is covered in the statement of the opposite by distinguishing between the time of Jesus (as the time of the wedding) and the time after Jesus ("in that day").

To continue, however, two analogies were added about the patch and the wineskin. The point is that even if the "Jesus people" now are fasting, they do so for reasons altogether different than others may have for so doing (such as the disciples of John and the Pharisees). The separation between the "Jesus people" and other groups is like that between the "old" and the "new." This imagery is projected back upon the time of the wedding when Jesus' new wine threatened to burst the old skins. Thus the chreia still stands as appropriate to the inauguration of the new group, even though the practice of the new group is fully contrary to that associated with Jesus himself.

Only the example, introductory eulogy and author's conclusion are missing from the pattern, though the authoritative judgment also appears to be weak. An example for an argument about the historical novelty of the new *ethos* would be difficult to find. An introduction of praise and Mark's own conclusion are dismissed by the narrative context. The authoritative judgment may be weak, but mainly because it continues the metaphor of the wineskins. It serves, however, as a pronouncement of the principle taken from the chreia, and aptly concludes the argumentation.

3) Mark 2:23-28. The next pronouncement story in Mark does employ the argument from example, and illustrates the difficulty early Christians confronted in their search for proofs of this kind. The original chreia can be restored by noting that, as the story stands, Jesus' first response (what David did) engages the problem specified in the amplified setting, not the issue addressed by the question placed to him. The question was about "doing what is not lawful on the sabbath." The original response to this question was not erased in the process of elaboration, but it was displaced to a position after the reference to what David did (verse 27). Putting the question and the appropriate response together, a fine Cynic chreia results.

When asked why he was (they were) doing what is not lawful on the sabbath, Jesus replied, "The sabbath was made for people, not people for the sabbath."

The issue in this chreia is clearly a violation of Jewish code. Because the referent for the objection is not stated while the reason for the objection is stated so clearly, one probably should seek the situation of origin in the later experience of Jesus' followers, rather than in the time of the historical Jesus. It is difficult to tell how early such a specific issue may have arisen among the followers of Jesus. The Cynic style of the rejoinder, though, was still quite adequate to the situation. In distinction

from the chreia about the physician, moreover, which was taken from Greek proverbial lore, this rejoinder parallels sayings attributed to teachers in the Pharisaic-rabbinic tradition. The point of the chreia is made by introducing another perspective on the sabbath with which the objectors also must agree. The logic challenges the notion of "lawful" by an appeal to a more general principle about the purpose of the sabbath. This confounds the objection.

The later elaboration of this chreia can be seen from two perspectives. The additions it received can be understood as an elaboration of the original chreia by specifying the unlawful activity and supplying the argument by example from the story about David. Nevertheless, as the story now stands, the story about David becomes the "chreia" to be elaborated, and the original saying takes its place as the rationale. Thus the present pronouncement story is actually the creation of a new argumentation.

Situation

One sabbath he was going through the grainfields; and as they made their way his disciples began to pluck ears of grain.

Objection

And the Pharisees said to him, "Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the sabbath?"

Response

And he said to them, "Have you never read what David did, when he was in need and was hungry, he and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God, when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him?"

Rationale

And he said to them, "The sabbath was made for people, not people for the sabbath."

Judgment

"So the Son of man is lord even of the sabbath."

The elaboration was achieved by specifying the activity of Jesus and his disciples as plucking ears of grain to eat. That the author meant to describe them as plucking the grain in order to eat is clear from the new response attributed to Jesus. He relates the story of David and his men eating the bread of the presence in the temple. It is emphasized that this was unlawful, thus assuming the category expressed in the objection, but that David was hungry

and in need, an allusion to the reason why the disciples were eating the grain. Thus two "final objectives" are set in conflict, the "lawful" and the "necessary." This confounds the objection, however, not by means of a clever retort, but because the example is understood to carry weight with the objectors and thus embarrass them. The story is not a good chreia response, since without the authority of the scriptures the implied thesis is simply that "the necessary" is to be ranked above "the lawful" when in conflict. This is hardly the point of the story. Thus Jesus' response is actually a clever argument from example in support of a thesis not yet stated.

The story of David does meet the rhetors' definition of an example, but this story does not confirm the codes and conventions of the cultural tradition to which it belongs. It provides an exemplary precedent for Jesus and his disciples, even while it undercuts the position of the objectors from whose scriptural tradition it is taken. It does this by offering proof of an exception to their own rule.

While the story of David is an argument by example, it also functions in the new pattern as a chreia-response to the objection. It can serve this function because no more need be said. The story continues, however, by citing the original rejoinder in its function as the rationale ("the sabbath was made for people, not people for the sabbath"). The saying can serve as a rationale, because it states the principle embedded in the chreia about David's actions.

To this saying, finally, yet another statement was appended: "So the Son of man is lord even of the sabbath." This statement concludes the argument. It subtly develops the theme of the relationship of the sabbath to humans and their needs, but does so by focusing upon a particular "son of man" who, now that the principle about the subservient position of the sabbath has been established, can be called the "lord of the sabbath." This shift is more than clever. It utilizes a play upon the anthropological terms of the chreia and its rationale (David the king; "man"; "Son of man") to end with a bold assertion of Jesus' authority over the objectors and their sabbath rules.

The final statement, in fact, functions in the elaboration as an authoritative judgment. This judgment, however, comes not from traditionally recognized authorities, but from Jesus himself. Since the elaborator clearly intends the reference to refer to Jesus, the result is that Jesus is depicted as making an authoritative pronouncement on the truth of his own chreia. This is curious, because his authority is such that it cannot be derived from the chreia, from the principle of the thesis or from Jesus' skills in argumentation. His authority is superimposed upon the elaboration from elsewhere, and it is strictly self-referential. Jesus' authority in the story is based solely upon his own pronouncement of his authority.

The Rhetoric of the Pronouncement Stories

General observations can now be made on the rhetoric of the pronouncement stories and the light which they throw upon the early history of the Jesus movements.

Three broadly-defined stages can be discerned for the Jesus movement responsible for the pronouncement stories in Mark. Since the chreiai at the core of the pronouncement stories are characterized by the logic of metis, while the elaborations are concerned to argue for a novel ethos, the middle and later stages of a social history are reflected. A problem arises in attempts to push the chreia stage back to the first level, the time of the historical Jesus. The consistency with which the chreiai manifest Cynic humor and playfulness indicates that an early stage of reminiscence has been reached. It therefore is tempting to regard these chreiai as authentic memories, since their style befits a plausible social role for Jesus, and the nature of their social critique easily can be imagined at the beginning of the kind of movement they document. Yet, caution is necessary. Chreiai were not reports but highly crafted anecdotes in the interest of a very selective memory. Those that survived to become pronouncement stories, moreover, betray embarrassments and concerns best located within the early stages of the movement rather than during the period of Jesus' activity itself. Only in stance and style, therefore, are the Cynic chreiai evidence for the time of the historical Jesus.

The surviving chreiai are evidence that for a time playful rejoinder was sufficient in the face of critical questions, even among the followers of Jesus. The questions clearly engaged practices that were not easily justified when confronted by the context of culture. The issues were invariably concerned with social codes and etiquettes, especially those associated with meals--a prime occasion for social formation. The significance of these codes, moreover, can be stated quite precisely as markers of Jewish identity. Because the chreiai addressed these issues, though merely to redirect their embarrassment to critics, and because the elaborations also were focused upon them, though now with utmost seriousness, the Jesus movement they represent must have remained in close proximity to some form of early Judaism for a long time. Mark, writing sometime after C.E. 70, was still obsessed with the problem, for, unlike those before him, he turned the issues of the pronouncement stories into the conflict that resulted in Jesus' death. The most plausible context for such a social history is the synagogue, an institution of the Jewish diaspora to which this Jesus movement apparently belonged for more than a generation. But eventually, the "Jesus people" were unable to claim further the right to synagogue membership, and suffered a painful separation.

The elaborations generally stem from a time after the separation, for they assume a definite demarcation between

"us" and "them." A further sign that the elaborations were constructed after the period of actual debate is that the arguments are fully self-serving. They cannot reflect authentic dialogue, for they do not honestly engage the objectors on any common ground. Nevertheless, though belated and intended for in-house rehearsal, considerable energy was expended in establishing theses for the new ethos and developing the supporting arguments.

When compared with the confirmation of approved chreiai in Greek provenance, though, these elaborations look strange. Many of the odd features already have been noted. It now can be suggested that all of the strange rhetorical twists are due to a single circumstance. The logic is strained because the rhetoric of confirmation assumed a culture already in place from which the values and proofs needed for arguments could be taken. The Jesus movement contested the values of the Jewish-Greco-Roman world, and thus the conventional fund of proofs that were available at large was tainted. The new movement had no fund of its own, for it was only in the process of defining itself against the prevailing cultural traditions. The task was difficult therefore. It was especially difficult because the logic of self-definition that it did possess was negative, merely the métis of Cynic critique. Substitutes for all the authorities left behind therefore had to be determined, and arguments in support invented.

A profile of this strange new logic can now be given. The elaboration of the enigmatic was achieved by developing the dialectic of opposites and by incorporating irony. This is particularly clear in the rationales and statements of the opposite. But it extends as well to the way in which the values indicated by the "final objective" were regularly overturned. Introduced indirectly, they then were marked ironically with quotes. Thus the "right," the "lawful," the "good" were all subverted in the interest of clearing a space for the new social experiment. There is also, for the same reason, a high incidence of contrasts used throughout these stories. Many of them make their point negatively by showing that the contrasting position is flawed: Who, indeed, would sew a new patch on an old garment? Thus the logic of critique characteristic for the chreia continued in the elaboration as rebuttal.

Traditional exempla and citations from scriptural authorities could not be used without care. Examples and citations that could be used, taken mainly from the Jewish scriptures, invariably had a double edge. They often supported the thesis by indicating a embarrassing inconsistency or conundrum between the logic of the objectors and the proofs from their tradition. The strategy of rebuttal, appropriate to the "second speech," is clear.

The situation was altogether different with the analogy. Analogies could be invented, need not be traditional and, in distinction from the example and citation, were not

dependent upon texts and traditions. Thus the pronouncement stories, as is the case with the sayings traditions attributed to Jesus in general, team with analogies. The creative use of analogy is actually a distinguishing characteristic of early Christian ingenuity. Most depart from the customary form and function of the analogy in Greek usage. The Greek παραβολή illustrated the less familiar by reference to the customary and more familiar. In early Christian practice, extreme and unusual analogies were frequently used in the interest of indicating new phenomena hardly defined or events that marked, not the way things go in the daily round, but ruptures at the border between an old order and a new. Analogies were actually used even to create a new kind of "example" where needed in a pattern of elaboration. References to "the one who..." or "whoever..." frequently function as examples, though they are indefinite and serve as images, not of what has been actualized, but of what is to be imagined if the new ethos is to succeed. And so the claim to novelty determined new and peculiar uses, even for the analogy.

The most startling innovation, however, certainly is that which occurred in the case of the authoritative pronouncement. The elaborated chreiai of Jesus are rightly called pronouncement stories, because they come to climax in the pronouncement he makes upon the situation. Jesus' pronouncements come at the end of the elaborations and function in the pattern as authoritative judgments. The reason for this odd result is that the Jesus movement had no other authority to which to appeal. Thus, in the course of searching for reasons, all of the arguments and proofs for the novel social order ultimately fell to his attribution, including the authoritative judgment. This subverts all normal logic, for the force of persuasion is finally grounded, not in the rules of discourse and reason, but in a self-authenticating sovereignty. Jesus does not win because his reasons are sound nor because of his metis. He wins because he is the sole authority for the "Jesus people." He wins because he is the founder figure, the one who "came to call the sinners," the "Son of man who is lord of the sabbath." It is therefore not the logic of the elaboration that was ultimately persuasive for these early Christians. They were persuaded for other reasons, and used the logic of elaboration to rationalize their persuasions. For such an argumentation the proper response is neither consent nor debate, but obedience.

CONCLUSION

The movement responsible for the pronouncement stories in Mark was only one of many movements stemming from Jesus. Several others also can be identified. Each formed a different kind of group and developed a distinctly different pattern of rationalization. Though Mark was aware of other Jesus movements and though he incorporated many of their traditions into his Gospel, his preference seems

to have been with the pronouncement-story people. In his composition the pronouncement stories play a very critical role, and they are the stories in which Jesus is portrayed as a teacher with authority. The study has shown that the rhetoric of these stories does not match the usual image of a teacher. Both Matthew and Luke understood that in their own ways, and worked to change Mark's portrayal of Jesus by emphasizing that he gave instruction to his listeners and that some who heard him were persuaded of his teachings. One of the ways Matthew and Luke did that was by incorporating into Mark's story another tradition of the sayings of Jesus (known to scholars as Q ["Source"]). The Church's image of Jesus as the teacher is, therefore, actually a later amalgam of diverse depictions of Jesus taken from the Synoptic and other Gospels. In the process of harmonization, Jesus' instruction lost its Cynic edge, but the authority with which he was imagined to speak continued as that of a sovereign. The pronouncement stories mark a major juncture in the early invention of a total authority attributed to Jesus. As elaborated chreiai, the pronouncement stories are a primary source for the picture of the Church's lord who speaks with authority.⁵⁹

NOTES

¹ Two reports on the Chreia Project at Claremont have been published. See O'Neil, "The Chreia in Greco-Roman Literature and Education," and Hock, "The Institute Chreia Project at the Press."

² Epictetus' lecture "On the Cynic Life" appears in his Discourses 3.22. Authors and works cited throughout the essay will be found listed in the bibliography at the end.

³ Walz, 1.214.

⁴ Walz, 1.215.

⁵ Two corpora of rhetorical handbooks may be distinguished: the classical texts from the Greco-Roman period, and the texts produced subsequently during the long history of rhetorical education, especially in the Byzantine tradition of Western civilization. Those from the classical period are listed in "Part I" and are included in the "Bibliography" as separate items. They are available in English translation in the Loeb Classical Library. The large corpus of handbooks and commentaries from the later periods are largely untranslated. The texts were published in multivolume sets during the last century by Walz and Spengel. The Progymnasmata are included in these publications. The works of Hermogenes and the Progymnasmata of Aphthonius are published in later critical editions by Rabe.

⁶ Major studies of ancient rhetoric and education have been published by Bonner, Clarke, Jaeger, Kennedy, Lausberg, Marrou, Martin, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, Smith and Volkmann. See the "Bibliography" for titles. For an

important study on the origin of rhetoric, see the article by Farenga.

⁷ For an introduction to the work of the Pronouncement Story Group as well as an application of rhetorical theory to the pronouncement stories and other speech material in the Synoptic Gospels, see the studies by Mack, Robbins and Tannehill.

⁸ For an introduction to the chreia in rhetorical education, see the "General Introduction to Volume I" in Hock and O'Neil.

⁹ Hock and O'Neil, 85. ¹⁰ Hock and O'Neil, 87.

¹¹ Hock and O'Neil, 87. ¹² Diogenes Laertius 2.80.

¹³ Diogenes Laertius 3.35. ¹⁴ Diogenes Laertius 6.40.

¹⁵ Diogenes Laertius 5.19. ¹⁶ Diogenes Laertius 2.32.

¹⁷ Diogenes Laertius 2.32. ¹⁸ Hock and O'Neil, 91.

¹⁹ Diogenes Laertius 2.33. ²⁰ Diogenes Laertius 6.8.

²¹ Diogenes Laertius 6.54. ²² Diogenes Laertius 6.63.

²³ Lucian, Demonax 27. ²⁴ Diogenes Laertius 3.38.

²⁵ Diogenes Laertius 5.17. ²⁶ Diogenes Laertius 7.23.

²⁷ Diogenes Laertius 7.26.

²⁸ There is an unfortunate lack of comprehensive scholarly surveys of the Cynic tradition. Articles in the standard encyclopedias provide some orientation and the study by Dudley can be used as a place to begin. The studies by Guthrie and Hoistad document the intellectual integrity and sophistication of which the Cynics were capable. Because this aspect of the Cynic tradition is frequently overlooked, these works are especially important, even though specialized.

²⁹ Hock and O'Neil, 99.

³⁰ Aristotle, Ars Rhetorica 1.3.5.

³¹ Rhetorica ad Alexandrum 1.1421b.21-1422b.12.

³² Odyssey 18.136-37. ³³ Hock and O'Neil, 107.

³⁴ Walz, 1.244.

³⁵ The rhetorical handbooks abound in technical terminology. Familiarity with the significance of these terms was learned in the oral tradition. Thus these terms occur in the handbooks as a shorthand language, frequently

without clarifying definition or discussion. The modern student of ancient rhetoric determines the meaning of this technical language by means of exhaustive collections of their occurrence in the handbooks, paying attention to context, illustrations and such definitions as may be given on occasion. There are three scholarly handbooks from the modern period that collect important references and provide discussions of these terms. See the listings under Ernesti, Lausberg and Volkmann. There is also a contemporary study of argumentation that can be used as an introduction to most of the major concepts encoded in the technical terminology of the ancient handbooks. See the work by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca.

³⁶ Walz, 1.212.12-13. ³⁷ Walz, 1.243.16.

³⁸ Walz, 1.212.15. ³⁹ Walz, 1.213.8-11.

⁴⁰ Walz, 1.148.12-15.

⁴¹ Walz, 1.202.1-2; 1.202.8-10.

⁴² A discussion of first-century views on "imitating" the sayings of the sages, including references to Plutarch, Seneca and other authors, is available in Mack and Robbins. See the chapter on "The Elaboration of the Chreia in the Hellenistic School." Two important studies bearing on the theme of mimesis are listed for Döring and Castelli.

⁴³ For other attributions of this popular saying to Aristotle, Demosthenes, Cicero and Cato, see Hock and O'Neil, 325-26.

⁴⁴ Works and Days 289.

⁴⁵ Epicharmus Fr. 287. See Kaibel.

⁴⁶ Ars Rhetorica 1.2.8,19; 2.20.1-4,9; 2.25.8.

⁴⁷ Ars Rhetorica 1.3.3-5. ⁴⁸ 1.1422a.25-27.

⁴⁹ Rabe, Hermogenis Opera, 148-50.

⁵⁰ Ars Rhetorica 1.2.8; 2.20.2-4.

⁵¹ Ad Herennium 2.18.28. ⁵² Ad Herennium 2.29.46.

⁵³ Ad Herennium 4.43.56.

⁵⁴ Images drawn from agriculture (cultivation) were regularly used as analogies for the process of education ($\pi\alpha\iota\delta\epsilon\iota\alpha$ as "cultivation" and "culture"). The analogy of the farmer sowing seeds in various kinds of soil, for instance, was a stock metaphor for the teacher imparting instruction to students of various capacities. For a selection of references in illustration of this analogy, see chapter 6 of Mack.

⁵⁶ Demosthenes 18.58.

⁵⁶ A fine discussion of the "Aristotelian" and "encomiastic" biographies in the context of a study of the Greek encomium, together with a full collection of references to the sources, has been published by Lee.

⁵⁷ Semeia 20.

⁵⁸ For the contrast between Jesus and John, pictured as "hedonistic" and "ascetic" Cynics, see Luke 7:24-26, 31-35. Cynic parallels to this pericope are drawn by Vaage.

⁵⁹ A full discussion of Mark's use of traditions in the composition of his Gospel may be found in Mack.

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Lent

by Nancy Holbrook Sweeney

Christians know a special season
that leads them along the way.

Forty days of preparation,
to celebrate Easter Day.

Lent is a season when Christians
study the Bible and pray.

They pray for themselves and others
that God's will be done each day.

During Lent, Christians consider
how they live their lives each day.
They humbly pray, "God forgive us,
and help us to live your way."

Lent is a season when Christians
do things for those who have needs.
They share their belongings and skills
as Jesus taught by his deeds.

During Lent, Christians remember
Jesus—his life and his death.
They remember that God raised him.
He lives! Praise God with each breath!

A Prayer for Shrove Tuesday

by Peg Augustine

In the early church, people went to church to confess their sins on the day before Lent began on Ash Wednesday. Families gave up certain foods for Lent—eggs, meat, milk, and butter. On the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday, they had a feast to use up those foods. Today, churches often hold pancake suppers to celebrate the beginning of Lent. Use this prayer for Shrove Tuesday.

Dear God, as we eat this special meal tonight, help us to remember those who will be going to bed hungry. Bless those who have no place to sleep and no families to care for them.

Thank you for the food we eat every day and for those who prepare it for us. Thank you most of all for sending Jesus. Help us to remember him in a special way every day during Lent and to do the things he would have us do.

Lent

by Peg Augustine

Read Isaiah 2:3a, 5.

Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his path.

L: In the Lenten season, we remember Jesus is our Lord.

E: Jesus came to earth for Everyone.

N: Jesus told us, "Love your Neighbor."

T: Thank you, God, for sending Jesus.

Sing, "Jesus, Remember Me" or "Jesus Loves Me."

Pray: Dear God, when all seems dark around us, help us to remember that Jesus brings us light. Amen.

A Pax Service

by Virginia Kessen

The word pax is Latin for "peace." The pax service is a tenth-century English custom. The tradition reminded people who had quarreled or done wrong things during the past year that they could ask for and receive God's forgiveness.

The leader begins the service by handing out two pretzels to each participant.

Leader: As you eat the first pretzel, think about the people you have quarreled with during the last year. Have you quarreled with a friend? a member of your family? someone at school? at church? (Pause.)

Forgive those people and forget those quarrels. Say a silent prayer for each person you have thought of.

Keep a few moments of silence while each person eats the first pretzel and prays in silence.

Leader: As you eat the second pretzel, think about the times during the past year when you have been thoughtless or cruel to someone.

Was it a brother or sister? a parent? someone who is unpopular at school? (Pause.)

Forgive your actions and remember that God forgives you.

Keep a few moments of silence while each person eats the second pretzel and prays in silence.

Leader: Amen. Now go from this place knowing that God is always ready to forgive us if we ask. Now go in peace!

Symbols of Lent and Easter

Production Notes

Encourage the children to make posters or to cut out pictures of the symbols to hold up as they speak. If you have a number of very young children who are too young for speeches, you might let them hold up the symbols while an older child or older children tell about the symbol.

Characters

Child 1	Child 2	Child 3
Child 4	Child 5	

Child 1: My symbol is the butterfly. The butterfly has become a symbol for Jesus' resurrection. A butterfly begins as an egg. Then it becomes a larvae, a caterpillar, a cocoon, and finally, a butterfly.

A butterfly totally changes from one kind of creature to another. When we love and follow Jesus, we change too.

Child 2: My symbol is a pretzel. It is usually associated with the forty days before Easter that we know as Lent. A tradition that began during those days was to eat bread shaped to look like little arms crossed in prayer. They called the bread *braceiae*, which means "little arms." In other parts of the world, people called it *bretzel*, which later became pretzel.

Now people eat pretzels all year long. The next time you are having a snack of pretzels, say a prayer for the people of the world who have no food.

Child 3: My symbol is new clothing. Many new believers were baptized at Easter. They were given new white robes to celebrate their new life in Christ.

Now people buy new clothing to wear on Easter morning to remind themselves that just as Jesus rose to new life, we have a new life when we give our hearts to Jesus.

Child 4: My symbol is spring flowers. Like the new clothes that people put on for Easter, the earth has beautiful new clothing each spring. As we look at the flowers, we remember that Jesus gave us new life too.

Child 5: My symbol is the Easter egg. During Lent, people in the early church did not eat eggs. But the chickens kept laying them anyway. So when Easter came, there were lots of eggs to use.

Kings gave specially decorated eggs to their subjects. People painted eggs and gave them to children. When you make and play with Easter eggs, remember that the greatest gift of all was Jesus.

Hosanna! Hosanna!

by Daphna Flegal

Hosanna! Hosanna! (Wave palm branches.)

It's Palm Sunday today. (Brush palm branches on the floor.)

We wave our palm branches (Wave palm branches.)

And happily say, (Turn around.)

"Hosanna! Hosanna!" (Wave palm branches.)

"Hosanna! Hosanna!" (Wave palm branches.)

It's Palm Sunday today. (Brush palm branches on the floor.)

We hear stories of Jesus (Wave palm branches.)

And happily say, (Turn around.)

"Hosanna! Hosanna!" (Wave palm branches around.)

The Two Parades

by Nate Lee

Production Notes

Two Groups enter the stage from either side. Group One, the smaller group, enters from the left. Group Two enters from the right. Except for the words spoken by the leaders, all of the other lines can be divided into however many people want parts. They are just designated as Group and Leader here. It would probably be more visually interesting if most of the larger and older kids are in Group Two.

Characters

Leader One	Leader Two
Group One	Group Two

Leader Two: (to his own group) Hurry up! I hear the horns. You don't want to be late.

Leader One: (to his own group) Come on, guys!

Group One: Yeah, hurry! Let's go! I can't wait to see him.

Group Two: How many horses do you think he'll have this time? How many soldiers? I love those uniforms.

The two groups meet in the middle of the stage. They know each other. There may seem to be a bit of hostility, not as in two different gangs, but perhaps two different cliques.

Leader Two: (to Group and Leader One) What? You guys lost? The parade is that way!

Leader One: Not the parade we're going to.

Leader Two: What? You're not going to see Pontius Pilate enter the city of Jerusalem on the first day of Passover?

Group Two: What is the matter with you? Isn't that against the law? Yeah! You have to go!

Leader One: Ahh, we've seen the governor.

Group One: Yeah, we needed a change. This is a different kind of parade.

Leader Two: Oh, yeah? What kind of change?

Leader One: Haven't you heard? Jesus of Nazareth is coming down from the Mount of Olives!

Leader Two: I've heard of him. The prophet?

Leader One: You could call him that. Or you could call him the Son of Man.

Leader Two: Hey, that's blasphemy!

Leader One: I didn't call him that. I only said you could call him that.

Leader Two: So, this Son of Man—this Messiah of yours—I suppose he's got an army of his own.

Group One: Of course not! No way! How uncool!

Group Two: No soldiers at all?

Group One: Probably not.

Group Two: No horses? No shiny shields? No shiny helmets? No spears or swords?

Group One: Nope. No way. Of course not! Not a chance!

Leader One: Just Jesus of Nazareth. Riding in on a colt.

Group One: And lots of people shouting, "Hosanna!" And putting their coats down on the path. And palm branches, of course. And even more "Hosannas!"

Leader One: You don't get that with Pontius Pilate's parade.

Leader Two: No, you don't. Haven't I read something in the Scriptures about this? Was this foretold or something?

Leader One: So you have been doing your homework. Yes, it was foretold in Zechariah.

Leader Two: Jesus of Nazareth riding in on a colt. Sounds cool!

Group Two: What are you talking about? What about the horses? And the shiny shields? And the shiny helmets? And the spears and swords?

Leader Two: Look. You guys can go to Pontius Pilate's parade. I'm going with these guys to see Jesus.

Group Two: What? Are you out of your mind? Come on, dude!

Leader Two: I understand if you guys want to see all the shiny stuff. Me, I've seen it before. Who knows? This may be the chance of a lifetime!

About half of Group Two come with Leader Two.

Group Two: Yeah, you may be right. I could use a change of pace myself. Hey, it's not so far to walk. Sounds like it could be pretty cool.

The larger Group One now moves off and toward the direction they were going, leaving a smaller Group Two.

Group Two: Ha! Some leader! He just went off with that other group! He's going to miss everything! Yeah. The horses. And the shiny shields. And the shiny helmets and spears and swords.

Group Two pauses as they look at the large Group One disappearing, and then look the other way, and then look back at the large Group One.

Group Two: You know, I don't think the governor will miss us at his stupid parade. Not a bit. Seen one Pontius procession, seem 'em all.

Group Two: And he did say it could be the chance of a lifetime.

Group Two: *(calling after Group One)* Hey! Wait for us! Wait up! We're coming! Hey, I know where we can pick up some palm branches on the way.

The One Who Comes In Peace

by Rev. Steve Richards and Linda Ray Miller

All selections are from the Good News Translation.

Characters

Prophet	Narrator
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Everyone: Give thanks to the Lord, because he is good, and his love is eternal. Let the people of Israel say, "His love is eternal." Let the priests of God say, "His love is eternal." Let all who worship him say, "His love is eternal." In my distress I called to the Lord; he answered me and set me free. The Lord is with me, I will not be afraid.

(*Psalm 118:1-6*)

Prophet: Rejoice, rejoice, people of Zion! Shout for joy, you people of Jerusalem! Look, your king is coming to you! He comes triumphant and victorious, but humble and riding on a donkey—on a colt, the foal of a donkey. (*Zechariah 9:9*)

Narrator: As [Jesus and his disciples] approached Jerusalem, near the towns of Bethphage and Bethany, they came to the Mount of Olives. Jesus sent two of his disciples on ahead with these instructions: "Go to the village there ahead of you. As soon as you get there, you will find a colt tied up that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it here. And if someone asks you why you are doing that, tell him the Master needs it and will send it back at once." So they went and found a colt out in the street, tied to the door of a house. As they were untying it, some of the bystanders asked them, "What are you doing, untying that colt?" They answered just as Jesus had told them, and the crowd let them go. (*Mark 11:1-6*)

Prophet: Long ago, the people of Israel welcomed a new king. Here is how they welcomed him: Jehu said, "The prophet told me that the Lord proclaims: 'I anoint you king of Israel.'" At once Jehu's fellow officers spread their cloaks at the top of the steps for Jehu to stand on, blew trumpets, and shouted, "Jehu is king!"

(*2 Kings 9:12b-13, adapted*)

Narrator: They [the disciples] brought the colt to Jesus, threw their cloaks over the animal, and Jesus got on. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches in the field and spread them on the road. The people who were in front and those who followed behind began to shout, "Praise God! God bless him who comes in the name of the Lord! God bless the coming kingdom of King David, our father! Praise be to God!" (Mark 11:7-10)

Everyone: The stone which the builders rejected as worthless turned out to be the most important of all. This was done by the Lord; what a wonderful sight it is! This is the day of the Lord's victory; let us be happy, let us celebrate! Save us, Lord, save us! Give us success, O Lord! May God bless the one who comes in the name of the Lord! From the Temple of the Lord we bless you. The Lord is God; he has been good to us. With branches in your hands, start the festival and march around the altar. (Psalm 118:22-27)

❖ A Parade Is a Good Thing ❖

by Gail Kittleson

This is such a special day:
Mother says Jesus is coming this way!
Grandma says, "Now, children, come along, come!"
In the distance, I hear a hum.
Father has spread his coat on the ground.
A donkey is coming—what is that sound?
People are shouting and cheering out loud.
What is the meaning of this big crowd?
Hosanna to him who comes in God's name,
Blessed is Jesus—the one who came.
They're worshiping him and singing psalms,
Shouting, laughing, and waving palms.
We know that this means he is the King;
That's the meaning of everything.

Jesus Shared a Special Meal

by Tim Edmonds

Sing to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb."

Jesus shared a special meal, special meal, special meal.

Jesus shared a special meal so many years ago.

He passed around the juice and bread, juice and bread, juice and bread.

He passed around the juice and bread so many years ago.

We can share this special meal, special meal, special meal.

We can share this special meal with friends we've come to know.

Jesus Loves His Friends

by Daphna Flegal

Sing to the tune of "The Farmer in the Dell."

Jesus loved his friends. (Circle right.)

Jesus loved his friends. (Circle left.)

Hi-ho! I'm glad we know (Move to the center.)

That Jesus loved his friends. (Move back out to the circle.)

They shared a special meal. (Circle right.)

They shared a special meal. (Circle left.)

Hi-ho! I'm glad we know (Move to the center.)

That Jesus loved his friends. (Move back out to the circle.)

A Last Command

by Denise Harris

Love one another as I have loved you.

This was one of Jesus' last commands.

Yet do we really love one another?

And if so, why is it that
we make fun of the girl with crooked teeth
or the boy with the limp?

Why is it that
we say hurtful things about one another
or turn our backs on someone in need?

How can we live in his love and yet
be so unmoved by the suffering around us?
Jesus left no room for misunderstanding
in this final command.

And to demonstrate this love,
he washed his disciples' feet.

Love one another as I have loved you.

Can the meaning be any clearer?
Can the example set be any more pure?
Love one another as I have loved you.

Breaking Bread

by Nate Lee

Characters

Jesus	Peter
James	John
Owner	Disciples
Judas	Man with water

Props

any kind of clay jar or pot

lightweight table

chairs

one cup

round loaf of bread

Open with lots of people walking back and forth carrying jars of water, blankets, baskets, and other things. Peter and John enter.

John: What did Jesus say again?

Peter: He said to look for a guy carrying water.

John: Okayyyyy. I'm looking. Did he happen to say which guy?

Peter: Jesus said we'd know him when we saw him.

John: It's amazing how Jesus knows this stuff.

Peter: Amen, Brother.

Man with water jar comes up from behind and taps them on the shoulders, startling them.

Peter and John: Agggh!

Man with water: The Master sent you?

Peter: Yes.

Man with water: Follow me.

They follow the man, walking through the crowd of people carrying water and other things.

John: Where are we going?

Peter: Jesus said he would lead us to the house where we should have Passover supper.

They walk around and then come to the Owner who is standing in a doorway.

Man with water: This is the house.

John: Thank you, Sir.

Peter: (to Owner) Our Master sent us. He said you would have a room for us for our Passover supper.

Owner: The room is upstairs. It is ready for you.

As Peter and John climb fake stairs or climb onto risers, everyone else brings out the table and chairs and sets them up in the long fashion that we are used to seeing. It is okay if it takes awhile. Place the one cup and a loaf of bread at the end. Everyone is gathered in small groups, talking anxiously about Jesus.

Disciples: What do you think? / He's been acting very strangely, don't you think? / I don't get it. / He said he won't be with us soon. / He said he's going away? / What do you think he means?

Jesus enters, and all fall silent, except John and Peter.

John: Master! Welcome!

Peter: Jesus! I hope this room and meal please you.

Jesus: Thank you, Peter. Thank you, John. Yes, it is very nice. Please, everyone, sit down. I have something to tell you.

They all sit down.

John: What is it, Jesus?

Jesus: It is this: One of you will betray me this very night.

All disciples: (scattered) No! Not me! Is it me? Am I the one?

Jesus: I must die!

All: No!

Jesus: Yes! I must! I am the one the prophets wrote about hundreds of years ago. My Father sent me here for this purpose. But the man who betrays me . . . it will be much, much worse for him.

Judas: It is me, isn't it, Teacher?

Jesus: Yes, Judas. It is you. Go now and do what you must do.

Judas leaves.

James: I don't understand. How could you let him do that to you, Lord?

Jesus: It is God's will, James. I must fulfill the prophesy of the Messiah.

Jesus picks up the bread.

Jesus: *(in prayer)* Thank you, God, for this bread that we are about to eat.

Jesus breaks it apart, takes a piece, and passes out the rest.

Jesus: It is like this bread. My body is given up for you. For everyone. Take it and eat it.

Have each disciple taste the bread. Jesus takes the cup of wine.

Jesus: *(in prayer)* Thank you, God, for this wine we are about to drink.

Jesus takes a sip and then passes it on to the disciples.

Jesus: *(to the disciples)* Think of this wine as my blood. Soon, it will be poured out so that yours and everyone's sins will be forgiven. That is the sacrifice I must make.

All: No! No, Master! It can't be!

Jesus: It must be. But then, mark my words. We will drink wine again together some day in heaven.

Peter: Amen.

All: Amen.

Jesus and the disciples could sing a hymn or a song, or Jesus could leave and then they all leave.

Could It Be?

by Michael Williams

Characters

Narrator	Chorus (Spoken)	Luke
James	Nathanael	Bartholomew
Matthew	Thomas	Judas
John	Philip	Peter
Mark	Andrew	Reader 1
Reader 2	Reader 3	Reader 4

Narrator: Reclining around a table on a holy, holy night, a rabbi and his disciples talked. The rabbi stopped the conversation with a startling revelation.

Chorus: "One of you will betray me," he said.

"One of you will deny me," he thought.

"All of you will desert me," echoed his broken heart.

Narrator: Those disciples who were able tried to rise above their fright. The rabbi watched as his disciples balked at the idea that one of them could hurt him—that they could betray, deny, desert him.

Chorus: "One of you will betray me," he said.

"One of you will deny me," he thought.

"All of you will desert me," echoed his broken heart.

Matthew: Could it be me?

John: Could it be me?

Mark: Could it be me?

Luke: Could it be me?

Nathanael: Could it be me?

Thomas: Could it be me?

Philip: Could it be me?

Andrew: Could it be me?

James: Could it be me?

Bartholomew: Could it be me?

Judas: Could it be me?

Peter: Could it be me?

Narrator: "Before the rooster crows, you will say you do not know me three times," Jesus said. "For days, every time the rooster crows, one of them." The woman spoke even louder this time. "You're one of them." The people around him waited to hear. "Is he one of them?"

Reader 1: The woman approached and stared at Peter, "You're one of them." The woman spoke even louder this time. "You're one of them." The people around him waited to hear. "Is he one of them?"

You'll be reminded of the words you could not say."

The people around him leaned in to listen. "Is he one of them?"

Chorus: No, I do not know him.

I do not know the man, I say.

Please, just get out of here.

Please, just go away.

Reader 2: The crowd began to grumble, "You're one of them." The very night seemed to question, "Is he one of them?" The silence around seemed to echo, "Is he one of them?"

Chorus: No, I do not know him.

I do not know the man, I say.

Please, just get out of here.

Please, just go away.

Reader 3: "You're one of them." The woman's voice repeated, "You're one of them." Peter found it hard to breathe. "Is he one of them?" "You're one of them." His sweat cut icy rivers down his neck. "Is he one of them?"

Chorus: No, I do not know him.

I do not know the man, I say.

Please, just get out of here.

Please, just go away.

Reader 4: The rooster crowed as if to say, "You're one of them." A new voice came to question, "Are you one of them?" It was the voice of Jesus asking, "Are you one of them?"

Chorus: No, I do not know him.

I do not know this Jesus, I say.

Please, just let me get out of here.

Just let me go away.

In the Garden

by Linda Crooks

Characters

Reader 1	Reader 2	Reader 3
Reader 4	Reader 5	Reader 6

Reader 1: Jesus knew what was about to happen. He really didn't want to die.

Everyone: Not what I want, but what God wants.

Reader 2: So with his friends Peter, James, and John, Jesus went to the garden to pray.

Everyone: Not what I want, but what God wants.

Reader 3: Jesus knew that there was danger afoot tonight. He asked his friends to keep watch.

Everyone: Not what I want, but what God wants.

Reader 4: When Jesus was apart from his friends, he threw himself down on the ground.

Everyone: Not what I want, but what God wants.

Reader 5: "God, I am sad. I am frightened. You, who can do anything, can make this go away. But not what I want, but what you want."

Everyone: Not what I want, but what God wants.

Reader 6: Jesus got up and went to find his friends. They were sound asleep.

Everyone: Not what I want, but what God wants.

Reader 1: Jesus scolded them. "Can't you stay awake for even one hour? Your spirit is willing, but your body is weak."

Everyone: Not what I want, but what God wants.

Reader 2: Jesus returned to the garden and prayed. "I don't want to do this. But it's not what I want, but what you want."

Everyone: Not what I want, but what God wants.

Reader 3: And when Jesus returned to find his friends sleeping, he scolded, "We don't have time for taking a rest! The time is here!"

Everyone: Not what I want, but what God wants.

Reader 4: Judas led the soldiers into the garden. He went up to Jesus and kissed him.

Everyone: Not what I want, but what God wants.

Reader 5: The soldiers fell upon Jesus. One of Jesus' friends drew his sword and attacked one of the soldiers, cutting off his ear.

Everyone: Not what I want, but what God wants.

Reader 6: But Jesus asked them, "Why do you come here at night with swords and clubs as though I were a thief? Every day I have been in the Temple teaching."

Everyone: Not what I want, but what God wants.

Reader 1: And all of them ran away, leaving Jesus to the soldiers.

(Based on Mark 14:32-51.)

Thank You

by Alex Petrounov

Thank you, Jesus, for the truth you teach me!
Thank you, Jesus, for the good things you give me!
Thank you, Jesus, for going through the hard things
 that you went through for me!
Thank you, Jesus, for not giving up!
Thank you, Jesus, for thinking about me!
Thank you, Jesus, for loving me so much!
Thank you, Jesus, for dying for me!
Thank you, God, for Jesus!

Garden of Gethsemane

by Nate Lee

Characters

Jesus	Slave	James
Peter	John	Guards
Disciples	Priests	Lieutenant
Judas	Crowd	

Props

If you have older children in this drama, create clubs and swords from cardboard and foil. If you have younger children in this drama, let them pretend to use clubs and swords.

Very dark stage. Peter and Jesus are walking together. James and John are a little behind. The mood is very quiet. Peter looks around, nervously.

Peter: A very dark night tonight. Very dark.

Jesus: Yes, it is.

Peter: Usually the garden of Gethsemane is beautiful...

Jesus: Yes.

Peter: But tonight, it seems . . . different.

Jesus: You are troubled by what I said at supper, Peter.

Peter: Jesus, I will stay by you—in prison—even to death!

Jesus: I am sorry to tell you this, Peter, but you will deny you even know me.

Peter: No! Not me, Master. Never!

Jesus: You will deny me three times, Peter. This very night, before the cock crows.

Peter: I will never deny you, Lord. Never.

Jesus: Wait here with the others, Peter. Keep watch. I must go pray.

(Peter sits with the other two. Jesus moves to the other side of the stage.)

Jesus: *(praying)* My Father, if it is your will, please let this cup—this duty—be taken from me. *(pauses silently, listening)* I want to do your will, not mine.

(Jesus pauses a moment, gathers his strength, then gets up. Jesus returns to the disciples, who are sleeping. He looks at them, sleeping, and shakes his head sadly.)

Jesus: *(quietly)* Peter? James? John?

(They awake with a start, even though Jesus spoke quietly.)

Peter: Master. Oh. Uhhh . . . I must have. . . .

Jesus: You couldn't even stay awake an hour with me? The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.

James: We're sorry, Lord.

John: It's been a very long day, Master. And it's so dark. . . .

Jesus: *(hears something)* Get up! The betrayer is here!

(The disciples rise. Judas enters, followed by priests and guards with swords and clubs. He comes up to Jesus.)

Judas: *(kissing Jesus on the cheek)* Teacher!

Jesus: You betray the Messiah with a kiss, Judas?

Lieutenant: Arrest that man!

(A few guards move forward.)

Peter: You will never take him!

(James, Peter, and John draw their swords. They fight with some of the mob. Suddenly, Peter takes a big swipe near a slave's ear.)

Slave: Aggggh! My ear! My ear! You've cut it off!

Jesus: Put your swords down! *(holds onto the slave's cut-off ear)* You live by the sword, you will die by the sword. *(Jesus heals the man's ear.)*

Slave: *(holding his hand over his ear)* It's all better! He fixed it! It's a miracle! *(Members of the crowd gasp in amazement.)*

Crowd: Did you see that? / He cured him. / I heard about such things. / It's a miracle! / It really is a miracle! / This Jesus of Nazareth / I can hardly believe it. / Better not tell anyone. / Maybe we should go!

Jesus: *(to the crowd)* You come here in the dead of night? What are you afraid of? You saw me at the Temple. You listened to me teach there. But you did not arrest me then.

(The guards back away. Others turn away, ashamed.)

Jesus: The priests among you. You study the Scripture. Know then that you are fulfilling it. Know that this was foretold by the prophets.

Priest: That is blasphemy!

Lieutenant: Arrest him. Now!

(The guards take Jesus, and the mob exits. The disciples are stunned. The slave holds back a bit.)

Slave: *(to the disciples and to himself)* Your master. He touched me. My ear. He spoke, and we couldn't even lift our swords. *(He lets the sword slowly drop out of his hand.)* He fixed... He fixed me. Just like that. It's true then. He is... He is....

(The slave runs after the mob.)

James: Look. He forgot his sword.

Peter: Me too. *(He throws his sword on the ground next to the slave's and exits in a different direction.)*

James and John look at each other. They throw their swords down, too, then exit in Peter's direction.

Jesus Before the Council

by James Ritchie

For Voice Choir

All: They took Jesus to the high priest;

Group 1: where all the chief priests,

Group 2: the elders,

Group 3: and the scribes

All: were assembled.

Voice 1: Peter had followed at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest; he was sitting with the guards, warming himself at the fire.

Group 1: Now the chief priests

Group 2: and the whole council

Group 3: were looking for testimony against Jesus

All: to put him to death,

Groups 1 & 2: but

Groups 2 & 3: they

Groups 1 & 3: found

Voice 2: none.

All: None?

Voice 2: None.

Group 1: For many gave false testimony against him, and their testimony did not agree.

Group 2: (*Start when Group 1 says, "against."*) For many gave false testimony against him, and their testimony did not agree.

Group 3: (*Start when Group 2 says, "against."*) For many gave false testimony against him, and their testimony did not agree.

All: We heard him say,

Group 3: "I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days, I will build another, not made with hands."

Group 1: But even on this point, their testimony did not agree.

Group 2: (Start when Group 1 says, "their.") But even on this point, their testimony did not agree.

Group 3: (Start when Group 2 says, "their.") But even on this point, their testimony did not agree.

Voice 1: Then the high priest stood up before them and asked Jesus,

All: "Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?"

Voice 2: But he was silent and did not answer.

Voice 1: Again the high priest asked him,

All: "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?"

Group 1: Jesus said,

Group 2: Jesus said,

Group 3: Jesus said,

Voice 3: "I am," and, "You will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the power."

All: Then the high priest tore his clothes

Group 1: (Tear cloth.)

Group 2: (Tear cloth.)

Group 3: (Tear cloth.)

All: and said,

Group 1: "Why do we still need witnesses?"

Group 2: "You have heard this blasphemy!"

Group 3: "What is your decision?"

All: All of them condemned him as deserving death,

Group 1: death,

Group 2: death,

Group 3: death.

Voice 1: Some began to spit on him,

Voice 2: to blindfold him,

Voice 3: and to strike him, saying to him,

Voice 1: "Prophesy!"

Group 1: "Prophesy!"

Voice 2: "Prophesy!"

Group 2: "Prophesy!"

Voice 3: "Prophesy!"

Group 3: "Prophesy!"

All: "Prophesy!" The guards also took him over and beat him.

Voice 3: (*Hit fists into hands loudly.*)

Group 1: (*Hit fists into hands loudly.*)

Group 2: (*Hit fists into hands loudly.*)

Group 3: (*Hit fists into hands loudly.*)

All: (*Hit fists into hands loudly.*)

That They May ALL Be One

by Linda Whited

Production Notes

This is a monologue with an introduction and some additional remarks made by a narrator. The narrator does not need to appear on stage. Jesus may be spotlighted, kneeling in prayer. For older teens and adults.

Characters

Narrator	Jesus
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Narrator: As he thought about the hours ahead, Jesus prayed. First, he prayed for himself:

Jesus: Father, the time has come for all that you have planned to be accomplished. You sent me into the world to bring the good news to every person; to tell them that they could know eternal life by knowing you and by knowing me, the one you sent to teach them. I have given glory to you by doing all that you told me to do. I am ready now for the glory we shared before the world was created to be revealed.

Narrator: Jesus thought about his disciples. They had been his closest friends and traveling companions. He loved each one of them and wanted only the best for them. He knew that they would have to be strong and that they would need God's help. Jesus prayed for the disciples:

Jesus: I have told my disciples all about you. They know that all I have said to them comes as a gift from you. They have accepted your commandments and believe that you sent me.

I pray for the disciples you have given to me. I am leaving the world soon to come to you, but I will leave my disciples here in the world. While I have been with them, I have kept them safe. Now keep them in your care. Help them to be united in their love for me and for you.

I told my disciples many things while I was with them so that they could be filled with joy. They have heard and accepted your

commands. Now sometimes it is hard for them to fit in with the world. I am not asking you to take them out of this world, but I am asking you to protect them as they face the troubles that will surely come. Set them apart for your sacred use. I send them out into the world just like you sent me into the world. And for them, I dedicate myself to you so that they may be truly dedicated to you.

Narrator: It was such a long time ago, and yet Jesus prayed for us too:

Jesus: My prayer is not just for these who have been my disciples, but for all the believers who will follow me because of those disciples.

The world does not know you, but I know you and all of my disciples know that you sent me. I will continue to love them so that the love you have given me will also be in them, and I will be in them too.

Narrator: (Pray) Gracious God, thank you for sending Jesus into the world to save us from our sins. Help us to live the way he taught his disciples to live. Amen.

Kindness Is What God Wants

by LeeDell Stickler

"How much more worth is a person
Than a goat or a cow or a sheep?
It is right to do good on the sabbath.
That's the one rule it's all right to keep."
But the Pharisees muttered and mumbled.
They were angry at what Jesus said.
They whispered together and plotted,
For these men would see Jesus dead.
We know that God's love is for always;
Do good every day of the week.
God wants us to live just like Jesus,
Showing kindness to all that we meet.
The Scriptures say treat all with kindness.
Don't be afraid to open your heart.
Share all the kindness inside you,
And that's a pretty good start.

Mystery of the Shaking Ground

by LeeDell Stickler

Characters

Child	Baker	Mother
Woman at the Well	Mary Magdalene	Potter
Cloth Dyer	Mary	Merchant

Props

Mother: straw carry basket for market day

Potter: straw mat, clay pots

Cloth Dyer: vat of liquid, cloth

Merchant: produce, straw mat

Baker: basket of bread

Woman at the Well: clay water jar

Setting

It is early in the morning, just at daybreak in the city of Jerusalem. It is the day after the sabbath and the Passover. During the Passover, Jesus had been crucified and buried in Joseph of Arimathea's tomb. The city is nervous and anxious to get back to normal. A mother and her child have come early to the market to purchase food after the sabbath.

Sound

Sound of the earthquake. (Group of children sitting in chairs stomping feet, making the stage shake.)

Child: *(grabs mother's tunic and tries to hide behind her) Mother, what was that? It felt as though the earth was rolling and rumbling under my feet. I felt as though I was going to fall down. I wonder if other people felt it too.*

Mother: I've never felt that before. Why don't you ask some of the people here in the marketplace? It's a mystery to me.

Child: *(walks to where the Potter is setting pots on a straw mat) Potter, my mother and I have just come to the marketplace. But as we walked,*

we felt the earth rolling and rumbling beneath our feet. This has never happened before. Do you know what has happened? It's a mystery to me!

Potter: I was setting out my pots in the marketplace. I wanted an early start. It's the day after the sabbath and bound to be a busy one in the marketplace. There was such a crowd in the city for the Passover. Before they head back to their villages, I'm bound to sell a lot of pots. Just as I was setting them out, two of my pots fell off the shelf and broke. I looked to see if someone had been careless. But that wasn't it. It felt as though the very earth beneath my feet was shivering and shaking. I can't help you. It's a mystery to me.

Child: (*walks up to the Cloth Dyer who is dipping a red cloth in a vat of red dye and wringing it out*) Cloth Dyer, my mother and I have just come to the marketplace. But as we walked, we felt the earth rolling and rumbling beneath our feet. The Potter says he felt the earth shivering and shaking. This has never happened before. Do you know what has happened? It's a mystery to me!

Cloth Dyer: (*pulls cloth from vat of dye and wrings it out and hangs it up to dry*) I was mixing my vat of dye for my cloth. I've heard that the curtain in the Temple was ripped from top to bottom on Friday. I want to be prepared if the high priest wants another one. That's when the dye in my vat sloshed over onto the ground. Now I'm not sure there will be enough. It felt like the earth was quivering and quaking.

Child: (*to the Merchant who is setting out his fruits and vegetables*) Merchant, my mother and I have just come to the marketplace. But as we walked, we felt the earth rolling and rumbling beneath our feet. The Potter says he felt the earth shivering and shaking. The Cloth Dyer said he felt the earth quivering and quaking. This has never happened before. Do you know what has happened? It's a mystery to me!

Merchant: At first I thought it was a Roman legion marching through the marketplace. There have been many soldiers in Jerusalem for the Passover. I think they were expecting trouble from Jesus and his disciples. I was almost afraid to set out my apples and pomegranates. I just knew the horses would stampede through the market and trample all my beautiful produce. But I waited and nothing more happened. But it felt as though the earth was rocking and rattling.

Child: *(to the Baker who is setting out baskets of bread)* Baker, my mother and I have just come to the marketplace. But as we walked, we felt the earth rolling and rumbling beneath our feet. The Potter says he felt the earth shivering and shaking. The Cloth Dyer said he felt the earth quivering and quaking. The Merchant said he felt the earth rocking and rattling. This has never happened before. Do you know what has happened? It's a mystery to me!

Baker: I heard it too. I had stirred up the fire in my oven way before the sun came up. Now that the sabbath is over, there will be many people who will want my loaves of bread. The first batch was just about ready and I was removing the loaves from the heated stones when I felt it. I almost dropped the loaves onto the coals in the bottom of the oven. It felt like the earth was tossing and turning.

Child: *(to the Woman at the Well)* Woman, my mother and I have just come to the marketplace. But as we walked, we felt the earth rolling and rumbling beneath our feet. The Potter says he felt the earth shivering and shaking. The Cloth Dyer said he felt the earth quivering and quaking. The Baker said he felt the earth tossing and turning. The Merchant says he felt the earth rocking and rattling. This has never happened before. Do you know what has happened? It's a mystery to me!

Woman at the Well: *(setting her jar on the ground)* I heard it and felt it. Just as I was coming back from the well with a full jar of water, the earth began to shudder and sway. I thought I would fall to the ground if I hadn't found a tree branch to hold on to. At least I wasn't the only one who felt it. There were several of us who had come to the well to get water this early in the morning before the sun becomes too hot.

Child: *(to Mary Magdalene and the other Mary)* Mary Magdalene and Mary, my mother and I have just come to the marketplace. But as we walked, we felt the earth rolling and rumbling beneath our feet. The Potter says he felt the earth shivering and shaking. The Cloth Dyer said he felt the earth quivering and quaking. The Baker said he felt the earth tossing and trembling. The Merchant says he felt the earth rocking and rattling. The Woman at the Well said she felt the earth shudder and sway. This has never happened before. Do you know what has happened? It's a mystery to me!

Mary Magdalene: It's not a mystery to me. I know what happened! Mary and I were on our way to the tomb where they had laid our friend and teacher, Jesus. On Thursday night, he had been arrested and tried by the council. Then the Roman governor, Pilate, sentenced him to die on a cross. Joseph had a tomb in a garden that he let them use to bury Jesus. Mary and I were on our way to prepare his body for a proper burial. That's when it happened.

Child: That's when the earth rolled and rumbled? That's when the earth shivered and shook? That's when the earth quivered and quaked? That's when the earth tossed and trembled? That's when the earth rocked and rattled? That's when the earth shuddered and swayed?

Mary: Yes, but it wasn't an earthquake at all. It was an angel. When the angel came down from heaven, it made the sound as it rolled back the stone that sealed the tomb.

Mary Magdalene: A good thing, too, because the stone was very heavy. We could never have moved that stone by ourselves.

Mary: The angel told us not to be afraid. He knew that we were looking for Jesus. But the angel knew that Jesus wasn't there. That's why he was sitting there—to tell us the wonderful news.

Mary Magdalene: God has raised Jesus from the dead. The angel even invited us to look inside to see for ourselves.

Mary: When we saw the linen cloths lying where Jesus had been only two days before, we knew. Jesus is alive!

Child: There is no mystery?

Mary Magdalene: There is no mystery. Just news of great joy. Jesus is alive!

Everyone: Jesus is alive!

Pass It On

by Shelba Shelton Nivens

Production Notes

This is a dramatization of the women at the empty tomb, to begin a service of joy and celebration on Easter Sunday. It is designed for easy production. Few props are needed.

Characters

Mary Magdalene	Other Mary
Salome	Angel

Costumes

White robe for Angel. Biblical dress for women.

Props and Scenery

Baskets and jars for the women. Tomb is painted on a free-standing screen. Potted plants can represent the garden.

Tomb is downstage left. Mary Magdalene, Other Mary, and Salome enter from stage right with baskets and jars of spices and ointments.

Salome: How can the day dawn so beautiful and bright as this when there is so much darkness within our souls?

Mary Magdalene: I feel as though my world ended with Jesus.

Other Mary: He brought such hope into our lives. Everyone said he was to be our Savior or Deliverer. Why, I, myself, had hopes of my own two sons, James and John, sitting one on his left and the other on his right when he came into his kingdom. But now he is dead. All hope is gone.

Mary Magdalene: I feel that I just cannot bear it. It was he who gave me my life again. Demons had destroyed me. I was tortured day and night. I wanted only to die. And then I heard about this man called Jesus.... *(breaks down crying)*

Salome: (places arm around Mary Magdalene) We all are sorely grieved over what has happened. He was my own dear sister Mary's son, you know. How it hurts me to look upon her sadness. She was standing right there near the cross, witnessing his agony, when he died. (cries into her shawl)

Other Mary: But we must not stand here weeping. This is the dawn of the third day. The law of the sabbath has already prevented a proper burial. We must prepare his body right away. (looks in basket) Mary, did you bring the special ointment we prepared?

Mary Magdalene: (drying eyes) I have it. But here—you take it, Mary. (gives bottle to Mary) I don't think I can bear to look upon his poor, lifeless form again.

Other Mary: (briskly) Of course you can. Did we not all minister to him in life? This one last thing we shall all do together for him also.

Mary Magdalene: You are right. I must do this for him. But hurry, so we may finish this sad work as quickly as possible. (looks around) I was certain it was near this spot that they laid him.

Salome: He was laid in the new tomb over there. (indicates direction) My eyes were dimmed by tears, but I made special note of the spot so I could return with spices.

(Mary Magdalene moves sadly to the tomb.)

Other Mary: But, Salome, a heavy stone was rolled over the opening. I heard that the soldiers sealed it in place. How shall we roll it away?

Salome: Perhaps we should have asked one of the men to...

Mary Magdalene: (from the tomb) Mary! Salome! Come quickly! The stone has been rolled away.

Other Mary, Salome: (look at each other in surprise.) But...who could have done it? What does it mean?

Mary Magdalene: (bends to look inside the tomb) Oh, no-o-o-o! He is not here! He is gone!

Salome: Gone? He can't be! (hurries to look inside the tomb)

Other Mary: (hurries to look inside the tomb) It is true. He is gone!

(Women stare at each other in surprise, start to cry.)

Angel: (enters from behind the tomb) Why are you crying?

Mary Magdalene: (wails) Because they have taken away the body of my Lord—and I don't know where they have laid him.

Other Mary: It is an angel of the Lord!

(Women fall to their knees.)

Angel: Do not be afraid. Get up. Are you looking for Jesus, the Nazarene who was crucified?

(Women rise.)

Mary Magdalene: Yes, but we cannot find him.

Angel: Why are you so surprised? Did he not tell you that the Messiah would be betrayed into the power of evil men and be crucified? And that he would rise again after three days?

Other Mary: (nodding slowly) Yes, he did tell us that.

Salome: It was back in Galilee...

Mary Magdalene: I remember...

Angel: Then why are you here looking in a tomb for someone who is alive? Jesus is not here. He has come back to life.

Salome: (in awe) My sister's son is alive? He is actually the Messiah?

Other Mary: (in awe) Jesus? The Messiah? The Deliverer?

Mary Magdalene: (joyfully) Yes! Oh, yes! It is true! I know it is true. Jesus is the Messiah! The Savior! My Lord! And he is alive!

Other Mary, Salome: Jesus has risen! He lives!

Angel: Then go and tell his disciples. He will meet you in Galilee, just as he told you before he died.

Other Mary: Yes! We must tell the others. I must tell my sons.

Salome: I must tell his mother, my sister.

Mary Magdalene: We must tell everyone. Jesus lives!

(Women hurry joyfully down the aisle, exclaiming loudly to the people in the congregation right and left.)

Jesus is alive!
He lives!
Pass it on!
Tell your neighbor!
Tell everyone!
He's the Messiah!
He's the Savior!
He is Lord!
He lives!
He lives forever!

Choir: (*joyful music such as "He Lives."*)

This Song by Nate Lee

I've seen a thousand lilies
Gathering to play
A triumphant trumpet chorus
Heralding the day!
The song's the purest, clearest
And bright as whitest light
Spreading 'round the world
It overwhelms the night!
Our joy arises, resounding
As all who hear sing out
Allelu-Leuia!
Let the Truth ring out!
Allelu-Leuia!
All things made anew
Allelu-Leuia!
This song given to you!

The Underground Resurrection

by Valeria Steele Roberson

Characters

Harriet Tubman: A former slave who went South numerous times to deliver others from slavery

Louisa: A young slave girl who is very curious

Clara: Louisa's very emotional mother

Charles: A young slave who was whipped many times by his master

MacRay: An older slave who is very wise

Ruth: A character from the Bible (can be played by a teen)

Isaiah: An ex-slave named after the character from the Bible

Daniel: A character from the Bible

Nonspeaking Parts: Mary Magdalene; Salome; Mary, mother of James; Angel

Props

Harriet's knapsack that includes a loaf of bread, a water container, a jar of salve, and a gun

Bale of hay

Shoes for Charles

Blankets

Old rags for bandages

Basket full of food and water containers

Scene 1

(The play opens as Harriet and her passengers are trying to hide from slave catchers. They're hiding in a barn with a concealed floor at the William Randolph farm in Buffalo, New York. Place a bale of hay at right. It is sunrise on Friday, two days before Easter, and everybody is asleep. Harriet wakes up and moves stage right away from the group and begins praying into a hole in the ground.)

Harriet: Oh, Lord, I need you to help us. Lord, we thank you for allowing us to reach this safe place in Buffalo, New Yawk. You done

brought us all the way from Maryland. And, Lord, now we's so close. Just a few more miles 'til we gets to Canada, to freedom. Please guide us to safety, Lord. Let your North Star shine! We thank you for deliverance right now. In the sweet name of Jesus, your Son and our miracle worker, I pray. Amen. (*MacRay wakes and walks over to her.*)

MacRay: Can't sleep. Miss Harriet?

Harriet: Too excited. First of all, I'm happy that y'all gonna be free. An' second, this marks two days before Easter Sunday morning. I don't like thinking too much 'bout Jesus sufferin' on the cross. But what comes after makes me want to shout.

MacRay: Jesus done rose from the grave. Miss Harriet, knowing Jesus was the onliest thing kept me going all of these years. (*Louisa wakes up and then wakes up her mother.*)

Louisa: Mama, I had a bad dream. They caught us and... (*She begins to cry.*)

Clara: Don't cry, baby girl. We's safe here in Mr. Randolph's barn. Don't nobody know 'bout this room hidden 'neath his barn. And don't you know that Miss Harriet ain't never got caught? An' she never will. (*Charles thrashes and talks in his sleep.*)

Charles: Yessir, master, I ain't gonna do it no mo'. (*Clara shakes him out of his sleep.*)

Clara: Wake up, Charles, it's all right. You won't have to be scared no mo' when we get to Canada.

Charles: I sho' hope so. (*Harriet and MacRay walk over to them. Harriet offers them all a piece of bread to munch on and some water.*)

Louisa: Thanks, Miss Harriet. (*Others say thanks too.*)

Harriet: Y'all go on back to sleep. Tonight we be travelin' in the back of a wagon most of the night.

Louisa: Miss Harriet, will you tell us a story?

(*As Harriet enacts the story at left, actors can be acting it out at right.*)

Harriet: A story. Well, since it's Easter time, I'll tell you 'bout the women who ran to the tomb early that blessed Sunday mornin'. There was Mary Magdalene, Salome, and the other Mary who went there

to anoint the body of Jesus. But what they found instead was God's miracle. You see, there was a great earthquake, and an angel rolled the stone away an' told 'em not to be afraid. Say, "Jesus is not here, for he done rose up!" After they saw that he wasn't there, the angel told 'em to tell the rest of 'em, you know, the men folk, the good news. And they ran to tell 'em.

MacRay: Sho' 'nuff. Only a powerful God like ours could have done sumpin' like that.

Harriet: But that's not all. The Bible says that some of God's saints who had been asleep got up after Jesus rose and walked around the city an' appeared to people.

Charles: Are you saying that dead folk got up and walked around? (*Harriet nods yes.*) That must have been a sight.

Harriet: Now, Charles, they wasn't trying to scare nobody. They were just witnessin' to God's power. (*Charles yawns.*)

Charles: I better get me some more shut-eye.

Louisa: I'm sleepy too. (*Louisa and Charles go back to their pallets.*)

Harriet: I guess that Charles don't believe that God can work a miracle.

MacRay: Well, I know God can.

Clara: I believe God can do anything. This is God's world.

Harriet: I had one of my sleeping fits a few weeks back; and whilst I was in it, I had a dream. I was in a dark place. All'a sudden, a light shone brightly in the distance. I walked toward that light, and there she stood.

Clara: Who?

Harriet: Ruth! She's one of my favorite Bible people because our stories are sort of alike. It takes a lot of faith to leave the known for the unknown. Anyway, this is what I heard and saw. (*Ruth enters from left. Harriet rises and joins her. She sits down before Ruth.*)

Ruth: Keep looking up to God, Harriet. God'll be there for you, just like God was there for my dear, sweet mother-in-law, Naomi, and me.

Harriet: God helped you do the right thing for your life, didn't God?

Ruth: God sure did. I loved my mother-in-law, Naomi, so much. When she told me she was returning to Bethlehem, I knew I had to go with her. By that time, I realized who God was. I knew I could depend on God. So I took a step in faith, and God blessed me beyond my imagination. You just never know what will happen when you serve the true and living God.

Harriet: Is it true that you were resurrected with Jesus?

Ruth: Oh, yes, Harriet. I was there on that happy day. We walked around Jerusalem telling everybody we saw about God's awesome power. Be encouraged, dear sister. Keep trusting in God. (*She exits right and then Harriet rejoins the others and sits down.*)

Harriet: Then I woke up.

Clara: Our God is still in the miracle-making business. Please, Lord, help us just like you helped Ruth.

MacRay: Praise be to God.

Harriet: We'd better get some sleep. We got a long night ahead. (*Blackout or play music to indicate the change of scenes.*)

SCENE 2

(*It's Saturday, the next evening. It's the night before Easter. Harriet and the others are moving up Freedom's Highway through the bushes.*)

Clara: I don't means to complain or nothin', but it sho' was nice to travel in that wagon last night.

Louisa: I'm so tired, Mama.

Harriet: I know y'all is tired. We don't have that much farther to go. Our next stop is on top of that hill.

Clara: Thank goodness. Don't know if'n I can walk much farther. My feets hurtin' already!

Charles: Me neither. I can see it. (*Points right.*) Come on, y'all, I'm hungry.

Harriet: Get back in line.

Charles: Why? We can see it ain't far. (*Harriet pulls out her gun.*)

Harriet: I'm not lettin' you mess this up. Get back. Shh!

MacRay: What is it, Harriet?

Harriet: Just a feeling. Let's hide over there. (*They move left and pretend like they're hiding. Then they hear horses on the road.*)

Harriet moves right and looks where the horses are going.) Oh, my Lord, that was too close for comfort. We'll wait here 'til it's good an' dark. Then I'll go and scout out the place. Have a seat, ev'rybody, and get comf'table.

Charles: I'm real sorry, Miss Harriet.

MacRay: He told you, didn't he?

Harriet: Yes, it was Jesus. I always get this feeling when danger is near.

Louisa: What does it feel like?

Harriet: I can't really explain it.

Clara: God will do that for God's chil'ren.

MacRay: Praise be to God. Takin' care of us, even when we act like we ain't got no sense.

Charles: I done said I was sorry. (*He steps on a spiny sweet gum ball.*) Oh, I...my foot.

Harriet: Shh. Shh. A burr got you. Let me take a look at your foot. It's pretty bad. I betta put some of my salve on that. (*She removes jar from bag and places some salve on his foot.*) You rest now. (*Charles lies down.*)

Charles: Those things sho' put a hurtin' on your foots. I gots to get me some shoes. Can't go no farther 'til I do.

Harriet: I'll see 'bout it in the mornin'. Too many slave catchers round now.

MacRay: It's always somethin' in dis here life. That's why the good Lawd says to take it one day at a time. Charles, we gwine get you just what you needs. God will see to it.

Harriet: Let's get comf'table.

Louisa: Miss Harriet, can you tell us a story?

Harriet: If you all don't mind hearing about some more Bible peoples, I can.

MacRay: Help yo'self.

Harriet: It seems like whenever I need some encouragement, God sends me somebody. One time God sent me one of the greatest prophets ever—Isaiah.

Louisa: Was he one of those saints who rose when Jesus rose from the dead?

Harriet: Sho' was. He believed mens should depend on God and not live by fear.

MacRay: Only a powerful God can raise people from the dead.

Clara: So what do you think Isaiah said to the people after he rose up?

Harriet: For one thing, Clara, I think he talked about how Jesus can heal these old bodies.

Clara: I wish.

MacRay: Don't it say in Isaiah: "By his stripes we are healed"? They sho' put a lot of them on him, too, before they nailed him to de cross. Jesus was beat just like we was. (*A man begins singing the spiritual, "Swing Low," off-stage right.*)

Harriet: Shh. Shh. Be very quiet. (*The man continues to sing. Harriet walks toward the singing. She exits right.*)

Clara: Lord, have mercy, where she done gone?

MacRay: It will be all right, Li'l Sister. (*Harriet enters, followed by Isaiah.*)

Harriet: Y'all, this here is Isaiah. Mr. Jones from up the road sent him down here to look for us. Ain't he a sight for sore eyes?

Isaiah: I got a wagon just a ways off through that brush over there. Follow me, and I take you to Mr. Jones's barn up on the hill.

Clara: God sho' answers prayers.

MacRay: Always on time. Here, lean on me, Charles.

Charles: Thank goodness. (*They follow Isaiah and exit right.*)

SCENE 3

(Harriet and the others follow Isaiah into Mr. Jones's barn. There are a few blankets scattered about. They sit around talking. Isaiah begins to laugh)

Isaiah: Y'all be safe here in Mr. Jones's barn. Right here is a basket full of food and water.

Harriet: Thank you so much, Isaiah. Ya'll, Isaiah been free 'bout ten years now.

Louisa: We almost free, too, ain't we, Mama?

Clara: Yea, that's right.

Isaiah: Ain't nothing like it. I still can't believe that you were just about to tell them about the prophet Isaiah when I showed up.

Louisa: How you get your name, Isaiah?

Isaiah: My mama named me after the prophet Isaiah. She loved all he had to say about Jesus. How Jesus loved the poor and cared about the brokenhearted. How he'd give sight to the blind and deliverance to captives. How he came to make a difference in people's lives. People like you and like me. You see, we know how all of that feels. We know about going without. But Jesus, he came to make life better for us all.

Clara: You sho' seem to know the Bible. Can you read?

Isaiah: Yes, ma'am, I sho' can.

Louisa: Mama, can I learn to read?

Isaiah: Child, you sho will. Just keep your hands in God's hands. All things are possible for God.

MacRay: Sho' nuff. 'Cause Jesus died on that cross.

Isaiah: He was despised and rejected by men, a bearer of our griefs and a carrier of our sorrows. He took it all on that cross with him. Yes, Jesus was our sin-bearing servant. Now that comes from the prophet Isaiah.

MacRay: And then Jesus rose again on the third day.

Isaiah: Yes, so it is by stripes we are healed.

Harriet: See, Charles, Jesus will heal your feet. He can heal all of our illnesses. One time I was so sick, didn't nobody think I'd make it. So when all around you seems so dark in your life, have faith 'cause God can do ev'rything but fail.

MacRay: Amen.

Isaiah: *(He rises.)* Well, I better be goin'. Y'all are safe here. Just a few more miles, and y'all be in Canada. Y'all can leave here tomorrow night. Miss Harriet, y'all be careful now. God go with you.

Louisa: Thank you, Mr. Isaiah.

Isaiah: Y'all is welcome. God bless all of you. *(He exits right.)*

Harriet: Let's get some rest. *(They all go to sleep.)*

SCENE 4

(It's the next morning, Sunday, around dawn. All are still sleeping. Harriet enters from right with a pair of shoes and some food to eat.)

Harriet: It's another Easter mornin' sunrise and I'm glad 'bout it. Lawd, we just want to give you thanks for Jesus Christ who suffered, died, and rose from the grave. And Lawd, we thank you that this is Resurrection Day for all these chil'ren you give me to take across to the free side. In Jesus the Christ's name, we pray. Amen. *(The others start rising as Harriet moves closer to them.)*

MacRay: Miss Harriet, happy Easter Day.

Harriet: Same to you.

Louisa: Miss Harriet, tonight is the night, right?

Harriet: We almost there. I got y'all some food, and here's some water too. So eat up. Charles, here you some shoes.

Charles: Thank you, Miss Harriet.

Harriet: How your feet doin' today?

Charles: Why, Miss Harriet, they's just like new.

Harriet: I told you that Jesus is a healer.

MacRay: Amen. Always give us just what we need.

Clara: Are you sure we should try tonight?

Harriet: Child, we'll see. God didn't bring us this far to leave us.

MacRay: No, siree. No more slave days and slave ways. We be delivered, just like Daniel from the lions' den.

Louisa: Tell 'em, Miss Harriet, tell 'em.

Harriet: Louisa wants me to tell you about my dream about the prophet Daniel.

Louisa: And he rose on that day when Jesus rose, didn't he, Miss Harriet?

Harriet: Why, 'course he did. Daniel tried to encourage his people during a time when they were slaves, just like so many of our people are. One of his messages was that God...

MacRay: ...was still in control no mater what their lot in life.

Harriet: That's right.

Clara: That's good to hear.

Harriet: Better to know. We have to live by faith, not sight.

Charles: Tell us more about Daniel.

Harriet: When Daniel came upon some people after he'd risen from the dead, he had a very important message for them. (*Daniel enters from left.*)

Daniel: God is a good God. God delivered me again and again. Just look at me. I'm a living, breathing testimony of God's goodness once more in the land of the living. So don't be scared of me. I just got a few more things I'd like to tell you. Many years ago, I lived in exile in Babylon, and it was a very trying time for me and my friends. However, there is one time in particular that I'll never forget. One time I slept in the lions' den all night long. I ended up there because I prayed to my God three times a day. I didn't care about a new law that said I couldn't pray. And God shut the lions' jaws, and they left me alone. So I know that when you are faithful to God, He'll see you through. (*Daniel exits left.*)

MacRay: Amen.

Harriet: Isn't God good? It's just a few more hours' journey before y'all be in Canada. We'll leave when night falls. All I ask is that you all keep God first and always help somebody else in this life.

Louisa: We will, won't we, Mama? Miss Harriet, thank you so much for ev'rything. (*They all thank Miss Harriet.*)

Harriet: It's like the good book says, "A child shall lead them." God bless you, child. God bless you all. This Easter, y'all gonna be delivered! (*Starts singing, "They Rolled the Stone Away," or another song about Easter.*)

Easter by Karen Williams

This is a group recitation with six children. Each child holds one letter of the word EASTER.

E: E is for Eternal life Jesus offers to those who will believe.

A: A is for All the miracles Jesus performed for those who would receive.

S: S is for the Soldiers who blocked his grave with a heavy stone.

T: T is for the Tomb where they placed Jesus. They thought he was dead and gone.

E: E is for Everyone—for all of us the cross Jesus bore.

R: R is for Resurrection—Jesus is alive forevermore!

I Have Seen the Lord!

by James Ritchie

Production Notes

You will need to make a representation of the empty tomb. Have the three groups stand where they will not be in the way of the actors entering and leaving the stage. Costumes can be as simple or as elaborate as you wish.

Characters

Groups 1, 2, and 3 to serve as a chorus		
Jesus	Mary Magdalene	Angel 1
Nonspeaking parts: Peter, John, Angel 2		

Group 1: Early!

Group 2: On the first day of the week.

Group 3: Early!

Group 1: While it was still dark.

Group 2: That early?

Group 3: That early!

Group 1: Mary Magdalene came to the tomb.

Group 2: Early!

Group 3: The stone had been rolled away!

Groups 1 & 2: (Gasp!)

Group 3: So she ran . . .

Group 2: . . . to find Peter and John . . .

Group 3: . . . and said to them,

Mary Magdalene: They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and I do not know where they have laid him.

Group 1: Then Peter . . .

Group 2: . . . and John . . .

Groups 1 & 2: . . . set out and went toward the tomb.

Group 3: The two were running together.

Group 1: But John outran Peter and was the first one to the tomb.

Group 2: John bent down to look inside. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, but didn't go in.

Group 3: Then Peter came along and went immediately into the tomb.

Group 1: The linen wrappings were there.

Groups 1 & 2: But no Jesus!

Group 3: No Jesus?

Group 1: The cloth that covered Jesus' face was there, although it was rolled up and set aside.

Groups 1 & 2: But no Jesus!

Group 1: Then John went in.

Groups 2 & 3: He saw . . .

All: . . . and believed.

Group 1: Even though he didn't understand what he saw.

Group 2: Or the Scripture that said Jesus would rise from the dead.

All: Then the disciples returned to their homes.

Group 1: But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb.

Mary Magdalene: (*Weeping*)

Group 2: As she wept, she bent over to look in the tomb.

Group 3: She saw two angels in white, . . .

All: (*Gasp!*)

Group 3: . . . sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, . . .

Group 1: . . . one at the head . . .

Group 2: . . . and one at the feet.

Groups 1 & 2: But no Jesus!

Mary Magdalene: (*Weeping*)

Angel 1: Woman, why are you weeping?

Mary Magdalene: They've taken away my Lord, and I don't know where they have laid him.

Group 3: After saying this,

Group 1: Mary turned around and saw Jesus standing there, . . .

All: Whoa!

Group 1: . . . but didn't realize who he was.

Jesus: Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you looking for?

Group 1: Mary thought it was the gardener.

Group 2: The gardener?

Group 1: The gardener.

Group 3: Why the gardener?

Group 1: Well, she certainly wasn't expecting Jesus.

Mary Magdalene: Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.

Jesus: Mary!

Mary Magdalene: Teacher!

Jesus: Don't hold on to me, because I have not yet gone to be with the Father. But go, tell my brothers that I am going to be with my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.

Group 1: So Mary went . . .

Group 2: . . . and told the disciples what she had seen, . . .

Group 3: . . . saying to them, . . .

Mary Magdalene: . . . I have seen the Lord!

All: She has seen the Lord!

Group 1: That evening, on the first day of the week, . . .

Group 2: . . . when the disciples gathered behind locked doors, . . .

Group 3: . . . afraid of their own people, . . .

Group 1: . . . Jesus came and stood among them.

Jesus: Peace be with you.

Group 2: He showed them his hands and his side.

Group 3: The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.

Mary Magdalene: We have seen the Lord!

All: We have seen the Lord!

"Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach them to observe all that I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Going to the Tomb by Linda Ray Miller

Sing to the tune of "This Is the Way"

This is the way the women walked, *(walk in place)*
women walked, women walked.

This is the way the women walked, going to the tomb.

This is the way the women looked, *(look surprised)*
women looked, women looked.

This is the way the women looked inside the tomb.

This is the way the women ran, *(run in place)*
women ran, women ran.

This is the way the women ran to tell the good news.

Seven Miles From Jerusalem

by LeeDell Stickler

Characters

Narrator	Simon
Cleopas	Jesus

Props

small table and chairs

round, unbroken loaf of bread

(Scene opens with Simon and Cleopas walking side by side, talking quietly.)

Narrator: On the day that the women found the empty tomb, two other followers of Jesus were on their way to a village called Emmaus.

Simon: What do you think about the news?

Cleopas: You mean what the women reported when they went to the tomb?

Simon: That's exactly what I'm talking about. Could it be true?

Cleopas: I've never heard of anyone dying and coming back to life before.

Simon: But didn't Jesus tell us that this was going to happen?

(Jesus quietly enters stage and walks along beside the two men.)

Jesus: You men seem so intent on your conversation as you walk down the road. What are you talking about?

Cleopas: Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place in these past few days?

Jesus: What things?

Simon: The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people.

Cleopas: You have heard how our chief priests handed him over to Pilate to be put to death.

Simon: We had so hoped that he was the one to save our people.

Cleopas: But now it's the third day since these things took place. Some of our women are telling a wild tale about what they saw at his tomb this morning.

Simon: They said that his body was missing, and there were angels present who said that Jesus was alive.

Cleopas: Some went to the tomb to check it out. The tomb was empty and the burial cloths were lying there. But they didn't see Jesus.

Jesus: How foolish you are and how slow of heart to believe!

Narrator: Jesus began with Moses and all the prophets and explained to the men all the things about himself in all the Scriptures. Soon, they drew close to Emmaus.

Cleopas: Stay with us. It is almost evening and the day is nearly over.

Simon: It is not safe for a traveler on the road at night. We would like your company.

(Jesus, Simon, and Cleopas sit at the table. Jesus lifts the bread and breaks it.)

Narrator: They gathered at the table for the evening meal. Jesus took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to them. Then the men instantly recognized that it was Jesus.

(Jesus gets up quickly and exits.)

Cleopas: Where did he go? He was right here.

Simon: We should have known, as our hearts burned inside us at his words.

Cleopas: Let's go back to Jerusalem and tell the others! The Lord has risen indeed!

Narrator: They got up and returned to Jerusalem. They found the eleven and told them all that had happened.

Do You Believe?

by Alecia Glaize

Group 1: One day the followers of Jesus
Were feeling quite sad and distressed.
Their longtime friend and their teacher
Had died a most terrible death.
The man they knew then as Jesus,
The Messiah, the Savior, God's Son,
No longer walked right beside them.
They feared that his message was done.

Group 2: But Jesus had promised his followers,
On the third day, he'd be raised from the dead,
So they buried him there in the garden,
And God raised him just as God said.
When the Marys came to attend him,
The stone had been rolled away.
And an angel as bright as the lightning
Said, "He is risen on this very day."

Group 3: Word of the miracle soon traveled.
You can't keep a good rumor down.
"Jesus is truly the Messiah!"
Was the word that went all over town.
Some women had heard Jesus talking.
With some, Jesus had shared a good meal.
At one time, he held out his hands,
And invited his disciples to feel.

Group 4: But one of his disciples named Thomas
Said, "I just can't believe that it's true.
Jesus alive? Never happened!
Whatever you say or you do!
To convince me then, show me the nail prints,
And place my hand on his side.

Till then call me Thomas the doubtful.
Personally, I think that somebody lied."

Group 1: Then something happened one evening,
As all the disciples came 'round.
And this time Thomas was with them,
But he just stood there and made not a sound.
"Peace be with you," Jesus said to them,
Then he beckoned that Thomas come near.
"Touch my hands and my side," Jesus told him.
"You have no reason to fear."

Group 2: Thomas stood there just like a statue.
He didn't wiggle or jiggle or nod.
But these are the words that came out of his mouth,
"You are my Lord and my God."
Then Jesus smiled in a sad way,
"I know you believe 'cause you've seen.
How blessed are those among you
Who believe but have never yet seen."

Are You a Doubting Thomas?

by Denise Harris

Are you a doubting Thomas? I'll explain just what I mean—
A person who believes in things when only felt or seen.
Or do you have the faith that comes from love within your heart?
Belief in him without a doubt, from the very start!
No scientific evidence, no hands-on verification,
No facts, no forms, no proof at all, no valid confirmation.
Just the feeling deep inside that God is in control.
This knowledge comes not from the mind, but deep within the soul!

What Was Going On Up There?

by James H. Ritchie, Jr.

Jerusalem, an upper room, just before Pentecost. Several disciples are sitting around a room. Disciple 2 is looking out of a window.

Characters

Disciple 1	Disciple 2
Disciple 3	Disciple 4
Disciple 5	

Disciple 1: Get away from that window!

Disciple 2: Why? What does it matter?

Disciple 1: You know very well why.

Disciple 2: Come on! It's all a matter of time. We cannot hide from them forever. Sooner or later, they are going to figure out where we are.

Disciple 1: Let's just pray that it's later.

Disciple 3: Did you see anything down on the street?

Disciple 2: Not much. A bunch of people on their way to make their grain offerings. A couple of Roman soldiers walked by a little while ago, but they didn't even slow down.

Disciple 4: Even if they knew we were up here, I don't imagine it would make any difference to them.

Disciple 5: Why should it? As far as they're concerned, it's over. We are not news anymore.

Disciple 3: Maybe they are right.

Disciple 1: What is that supposed to mean?

Disciple 3: Maybe it is time for us to get on with our lives. We cannot spend the rest of our days hiding our faith behind locked doors.

Disciple 5: With all the time we have been spending at the Temple, how can you say that we are hiding our faith?

Disciple 3: Our faith in Jesus. That stays here.

Disciple 5: You are right. It has stayed here.

Disciple 4: I can't believe it's going to be much longer.

Disciple 5: Until what?

Disciple 4: Until we receive the power Jesus promised us.

Disciple 2: It has only been a few weeks. We haven't forgotten what he promised us, have we? "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you..."

Disciple 4: "...and you will be my witnesses."

Disciple 1: He also told us to wait here in Jerusalem for that promise.

Disciple 5: That's the hard part.

Disciple 2: What's the hard part?

Disciple 5: The waiting.

Disciple 3: Like waiting for water to boil.

Disciple 2: Or for bread to rise.

Disciple 3: Right, like waiting for bread to rise.

Disciple 4: When we were children, it seemed to take forever.

Disciple 1: That reminds me of his parable about the leaven. The kingdom of God is like leaven, growing in almost unseen ways.

Disciple 2: That's certainly the way I grew!

Disciple 1: Unseen?

Disciple 2: No, just slowly. When I was a kid, I wondered if I was ever going to grow up. I couldn't wait to turn twelve, to be considered an adult, to be respected.

Disciple 1: That was one thing about Jesus. He respected everyone. Widows, tax collectors, lepers, women, the crippled, the blind, Samaritans...

Disciple 2: Even children!

Disciple 1: Even children.

Disciple 5: And he forgave the ones who didn't do the same.

Disciple 4: I can still hear him: "Father, forgive them, they don't know what they're doing."

Disciple 3: He welcomed people just as they were—even the sinners. Up until the very end, he kept on accepting, loving, and forgiving.

Disciple 1: Remember the time when the paralyzed man's friends tore apart the roof of the house where Jesus was?

Disciple 4: They lowered their crippled friend down into the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

Disciple 5: I can still see the shaft of sunlight beaming through the dust as they broke through, and the look on the faces of the scribes when Jesus told the man that his sins were forgiven!

Disciple 1: And the time he taught us to pray?

Disciples 2, 3, 4, & 5: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come...

Disciple 2: Happy are the poor in spirit,

Disciples 3 & 4: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Disciple 3: Happy are those who mourn,

Disciples 2 & 5: for they shall be comforted.

Disciple 5: Happy are the meek,

Disciples 1 & 4: for they shall inherit the earth.

Disciple 4: Bless the Lord, O my soul!

Disciples 2, 3, & 5: O Lord my God, you are very great!

Disciple 1: You make the clouds your chariot,

Disciple 2: You ride on the wings of the wind,

Disciple 3: You make the winds your messengers,

Disciple 4: Fire and flame, your ministers.

Disciple 1: What do you think it will be like when the promise comes?

Disciple 2: Will we be able to unlock the doors when we speak his name?

Disciple 5: Repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

Disciple 3: Bless the Lord, O my soul!

Disciples 1, 2, 4 & 5: Bless the Lord, O my soul!



Brand New!

by Karen Williams

Child One: Now, don't we all look our best?

Chorus: Brand new! Brand new!

Child One: New clothes, new shoes, and all the rest!

Chorus: Brand new! Brand new!

Child Two: But the new life Jesus gives can't be bought in the mall.

Chorus: Brand new! Brand new!

Child Two: He died and rose to save us all!

Chorus: Brand new! Brand new!

Child Three: If we are in Christ, the old is gone.

Chorus: Brand new! Brand new!

Child Three: The old is gone, the new has come.

Chorus: Brand new! Brand new!

Waiting and Wondering

by Virginia Kessen

Characters

Reader 1

Reader 2

Reader 3

Reader 1: Fifty days. That's how long it had been since Jesus rose from the dead. Fifty days. It wasn't long, and yet it was forever.

Reader 2: Jesus had promised to baptize the disciples with the Holy Spirit, and they were waiting. They were staying around Jerusalem waiting. Fifty days. It wasn't long, and yet it was forever.

Reader 3: "What do you think is going to happen?" they'd ask one another. "I don't know. What do you think?" So they waited. So they wondered. For fifty days, they waited and they wondered.

Reader 1: Waiting and wondering wasn't all they did. They prayed. They prayed a lot. They wanted to be ready. They wanted to be ready for—for whatever was going to happen. Fifty days. It wasn't long, and yet it was forever.

Reader 2: Then it was the Day of Pentecost, a feast day. People were in Jerusalem from all over. While the disciples were together to pray and wait, they heard a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were.

Reader 3: Next thing they knew, they saw tongues of fire resting on top of each one of them.

Reader 1: All the noise drew a crowd. The crowd was amazed. Even though there were people in the crowd from countries all over, they could understand what the disciples were saying.

Reader 2: "What's going on?" the people in the crowd wanted to know. "Aren't those people from Galilee? How can we understand them? We're Pathians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, and Asia; Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt, and Libya. We are visitors from Rome, Crete, and

Arabia. We hear them speaking about God's mighty deeds of power in our own language. What does this mean?" Others made fun of the disciples and said, "They must be drunk."

Reader 3: The disciples had waited for fifty days. Now the Holy Spirit had come. Now it was time to spread the good news about Jesus.

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